JAPAN, A 'CIRCUMSCRIBED BALANCER'
Building on Defensive Realism to Make Predictions about East Asian Security

Christopher P. Twomey
Doctoral Candidate
Department of Political Science and Security Studies Program
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

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ABSTRACT

Modern realist international relations theory posits Japan will assertively balance against China if it can, but bandwagon if its own balancing attempts seem doomed. I see different possibilities and describe why, based on both unit and systemic level variables, Japan appears unlikely to be put in the position of making this choice. Because Japan is blessed by being in a defense dominant situation vis-a-vis the Chinese, it can conceive of its security in absolute terms. Furthermore, it has been socialized on the dangers of assertive policies in the international system. Thus, Japan can be expected to pursue a policy of 'circumscribed balancing.' While this is good news for Sino-Japanese relations, it also means Japan will be less concerned about the fate of her peripheral neighbors. If the United States has interests in the region other than great power stability, it had better defend them because Japan will not.

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INTRODUCTION

For nearly a decade, analyses of U.S. foreign policy have been routinely framed by a single question: "How should U.S. foreign policy change after the Cold War?" While some analysts from both the left and the right answer by calling for an American return to a more isolationist posture,[1] policymakers have thus far escaped the lure of this Siren's song. Instead, in Europe another answer has begun to take shape—NATO has expanded and changed its mission. In East Asia, however, the inertia of America's Cold War-era, bilateral alliances continues to constrain creative strategic thinking.

American policy in East Asia, first and foremost, remains aimed at achieving U.S. objectives vis-a-vis the two regional great powers, China and Japan. In order to prescribe appropriate U.S. policy in the region, it is necessary to correctly anticipate the future relations between these two powers. In this paper, I argue that conventional wisdom derived from modern realism does not correctly predict Japanese behavior towards China.

The key issue that Japan will face over the next several decades is how to respond to a rapidly rising China. Traditional thinking about Japan's options suggests that it will assertively balance against China if it can, but bandwagon if its own balancing attempts seem doomed. I argue that Japan—with *or without* the United States as an ally—will neither assertively balance against nor bandwagon with China. Instead it will engage in what I refer to as 'circumscribed balancing.' Circumscribed balancing is defined by a propensity to avoid strong countervailing alliances, to ignore an opponent's growth in peripheral geographic and issue-areas, and to avoid offensive strategies. If Japan is indeed a circumscribed balancer then we can expect a stable *modus vivendi* between these two Asian great powers, even if Chinese intentions were to turn malevolent. However, we can also expect such a Japan to opt out of the traditional power balancing game, with substantial negative effects for peripheral states. Thus, despite the strong prospects for peaceful

1. This is most convincingly developed in: Eugene Gholz, Daryl Press, and Harvey Sapolsky, "Come Home America: The Strategy of Restraint in the Face of Temptation," *International Security* 21, no. 4 (spring 1997). See also Eric Nordlinger, *Isolationism Reconfigured: American Foreign Policy for a New Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

accommodation between China and Japan, the United States should nevertheless remain firmly involved in East Asia. If it does not, many of its important interests will go undefended by a Japan acting as a circumscribed balancer.

This paper develops the new concept of circumscribed balancing. I begin by acknowledging that concerns over Sino-Japanese rivalry exist and should be taken seriously. Turning to the realist theory of balancing, the paper then expands recent work on 'defensive realism' to hypothesize the possibility for circumscribed balancing and to predict the resulting foreign policy implications. I then use this framework to analyze Japanese policy, noting that Japan finds itself in circumstances that ought to lead it behave as a circumscribed balancer. When specific Japanese policies are examined, they indeed support this characterization. Finally, U.S. policy implications are briefly addressed.

Justifying Concern over Regional Great Power Stability

Sino-Japanese relations are important because they are at the foundation of U.S. policy toward East Asia. American decision-makers will decide how to remain involved in the region—and indeed whether or not to remain involved at all—on the basis of their expectations regarding Sino-Japanese relations. Unfortunately, these expectations are often based on misguided analysis. Many analysts predict conflict between the two great powers in the region, whether or not the U.S. remains involved in the region. Denny Roy articulates this view: "China and Japan are natural rivals . . . The legacy of the pacific war has reinforced the security dilemma, causing the two states to interpret all military activities by the other as offensive threats." He concludes that Japan is unlikely to make the first overt moves to balance Chinese power but states "serious political tensions between China and Japan are certain, and military conflict is likely, if China's economic power continues to grow rapidly relative to Japan's."[2] Other analysts come to similar conclusions.[3] Richard Betts argues:

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2. Denny Roy, "Hegemon on the Horizon? China's Threat to East Asian Security," *International Security* 19, no. 1 (summer 1994): 163-65.

3. In addition to those quoted in the text, see Thomas J. Christensen, "China, the U.S.-Japan Alliance, and the Security Dilemma in East Asia," *International Security* 23, no. 4 (spring 1999): 49-80.

> The most probable bipolar pair [in the world], and potentially the most antagonistic, is China and Japan. That would be the one with most potential for war among great powers (for example, with Korea as a bone of contention, as it was a century ago), unless the two somehow established a condominium (which I have heard no regional experts argue is likely).[4]

In a chapter ominously entitled "China's Plan for Japan," two journalists with long tenures in East Asia write:

> In the post-Cold War world it is Japan's weakness that threatens peace and stability by creating a power vacuum that the United States cannot fill, but that China can. A strong Japan in genuine partnership with the United States is vital to a new balance of power in Asia. A weak Japan benefits only China, which, the evidence indicates, aims not at a new balance of power but at Chinese hegemony, under which Japan, if it yields to that fate, would serve as China's richest and most useful tributary state.[5]

I am not as pessimistic as these analysts. There are reasons for optimism, even if expansionist aims and a willingness to use force characterize Chinese foreign policy in the future (and this is by no means assured). Japan does not need to feel unduly threatened by China, and its own balancing efforts will not likely lead to a spiral of rivalry and security competition with China. The following section develops the theory of 'balancing' to allow us make these specific prescriptions about the nature of Japanese foreign policy.

UNBUNDLING THE THEORY OF BALANCING

Balancing is the central concept in modern realist international relations theory.[6] Variations of balance of power theory dominate the field, and adherents to it populate the leading journals. To

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4. Richard Betts, "Wealth, Power, and Instability: East Asia and the United States after the Cold War," *International Security* 18, no. 3, (winter 1993/94): 70.

5. Richard Bernstein and Ross Munro, *The Coming Conflict with China*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1997), 185.

6. Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill Publishing, 1979), Chapter 6; Kenneth Waltz, "The Emerging Structure of International Politics," *International Security* 18, no. 2 (fall 1993): 73; Hans Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, Sixth Ed., rev. by Kenneth Thompson (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1985), Chapters 11-14; Stephen Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), 5; Barry Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany between the World Wars* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), 239. Bandwagoning and hiding are the two main alternatives. The former is broadly defined: "Bandwagoning refers to alignment with the source of danger." Walt, *Origins of Alliances*, 17. See also Robert Kaufman, "'To Balance or to Bandwagon?' Alignment Decisions in 1930s Europe," *Security Studies* 1, no. 3 (spring 1992): 417-447. Both these authors view bandwagoning as viable only for *lesser* powers. It is useful, perhaps, to remind ourselves of how much 'lesser' those powers are. Walt finds bandwagoning's theoretical utility mostly confined to explaining Yemeni, Jordanian, and early Saudi Arabian policy (p. 174). Kaufman uses it to describe small states in Eastern Europe in the 1930s (pp. 429-30). On bandwagoning with an eye toward securing benefits, acting as a jackal to feed off the remains of other's aggression, see Randall L. Schweller, "Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In," *International Security* 19, no. 1 (summer 1994): 72-107. Hiding—opting out of the game of international politics—might include such policies as declaring neutrality, assuming a purely defensive position, or even simply ignoring the threat. It too is generally

most realists, *all* great powers balance, so will Japan.[7] Unfortunately, balancing is an imprecise concept. Although the basic prediction of realism is that states balance, actual foreign policy remains underdetermined, and predicting foreign policy is what is required for making policy recommendations.[8] Different states will balance in different ways and for different reasons. While some authors have further delineated the range of bandwagoning options,[9] additional refinement of balancing options is also needed.[10]

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thought of as a strategy for lesser powers. Paul Schroeder, "Historical Reality vs. Neo-realist Theory," *International Security* 19, no. 1 (summer 1994): 117; and Robert L. Rothstein, *Alliances and Small Powers* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968).

7. Japan *is* a great power. Japanese protestations to the contrary obscure rather than reassure. To my mind, there is one superpower, the United States, and six great powers who have both global interests and influence: Britain, France, Germany, Russia, China, and Japan. These are to be distinguished from middle or secondary powers whose influence is primarily regional, such as India, Italy, Brazil, South Korea, and Israel. Unfortunately precise definitions of the term 'great power' are scarce. Morgenthau's classic discussion of power (*Politics among Nations*, Part Three) discusses a wide range of components but gives preference to industrial capacity (p. 138). Japanese capabilities in this area, the current recession notwithstanding, are the envy of the world. Japan's potent military capabilities (both actual and latent) are discussed at length below. Finally, characterization of Japan as a great power accords with the common usage of the term. Many authors would support my characterization of Japan as one of the six (or so) powers that are a notch below the United States, but still are players of global import on a wide range of issues. Some refer to these as major powers; I view this as synonymous to the preferable, original formulation: great powers. For examples of authors including Japan in this group, see Christopher Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion: Why New Great Powers Will Rise," *International Security* 19, no. 4 (spring 1993): 45; Michael Mastanduno, "Preserving the Unipolar Moment: Realist Themes and the U.S. Grand Strategy after the Cold War," *International Security* 21, no. 4 (spring 1997): 49-88; Charles William Maynes, "The Perils of (and for) an Imperial America," *Foreign Policy*, no. 111 (summer 1998): 46-47; Robert Kagen, "The Benevolent Empire," *Foreign Policy*, no. 111 (summer 1998): 32; and William Wohlforth, "The Stability of a Unipolar World," *International Security* 24, no. 1 (summer 1999): 5-41. For an argument that China should not be considered a great power, see Gerald Segal, "Does China Matter?" *Foreign Affairs* 78, no. 5 (September/October 1999): 24-36. Segal at several points contrasts Chinese weakness to Japanese relative strength.

8. Some neorealists' protestations that mere foreign policy is not the subject of their theories ring hollow, to me and others. For Waltz's original proposed limitation of his theory to the realm of international politics as opposed to foreign policy, see Waltz, *Theory of International Politics,* 69-73, 122-123; Kenneth Waltz, "Reflections on *Theory of International Politics*: A Response to My Critics," in *Neorealism and its Critics,* ed. Robert O. Keohane (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 330-334, 343-44; and Kenneth Waltz, "The Origins of War in Neorealist Theory," in *The Origin and Prevention of Major Wars*, eds. Robert I. Rotberg and Theodore K. Rabb (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 42-43. A convincing reply that, indeed, Waltz himself engages in predicting foreign policies can be found in Colin Elman, "Horses for Courses: Why *Not* Neorealist Theories of Foreign Policy," *Security Studies* 6, no. 1 (autumn 1996), in particular pp. 10-11 and notes 10, 12-14. Waltz's response in the same journal issue is lacking. At the very least neorealists to ought practice what they preach. I second Elman's admonition to these scholars: "Neorealists who believe that their theories are unable to make foreign-policy predictions, should stop making them...In addition, neorealists who believe that they are unable to make foreign policy predictions should start criticizing neorealists who do." Colin Elman, "Cause, Effect, and Consistency: A Response to Kenneth Waltz," *Security Studies* 6, no. 1 (autumn 1996): 61.

9. Eric Labs, "Do Weak States Bandwagon," *Security Studies* 1 no. 4 (spring 1992): 383-416 and Kaufman, "To Balance or to Bandwagon?".

10. While Morgenthau does describe a set of activities that can be used in the 'balancing process', he does not array these along any dimension of intensity, nor suggest when one policy might be pursued rather than another. Those he discusses include: divide and rule, compensations, armaments, reliance on a balancer, and—primarily—alliances. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*, Chapter 12.

This section will begin to address this need. The recent debates on offensive versus defensive realism have a simple implication: in different (predictable) circumstances balancing policies can be more or less assertive. In order to make use of this, I specify the central assumptions that distinguish defensive from offensive realism and that thus determine those circumstances. Then, I build on this and related work to deduce a typology that captures this range of balancing policies: from 'assertive balancing' to 'circumscribed balancing'. Three criteria define and delineate the range between these two: the strength of countervailing alliances, the scope of tolerance of an opponent's growth in peripheral geographic and issue-areas, and the propensity to develop offensive or defensive strategies and capabilities. Finally, the importance of this distinction to others (that is, to non-great power neighbors) is explained. In short, this section describes the conditions under which a state will be likely to behave as a 'circumscribed balancer' and explains why that should be the case.

Building on Defensive Realism

There is increasing agreement that structural realist scholars can be usefully divided into two schools: offensive and defensive realists.[11] Offensive realists, who have historically dominated policy debates, argue that security is scarce and therefore competition is fierce.[12] For scholars adhering to this school, anarchy forces expansion, as it demands relative power maximization due to uncertainty about the future. In contrast, defensive realists have more recently

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11. These are also referred to as Pessimistic or Optimistic realisms. For examples of authors that accept this delineation, see Benjamin Frankel, "Restating the Realist Case: An Introduction," *Security Studies* 5, no. 3 (spring 1996): xv-xviii; Elman, "Horses for Courses," in particular, see chart on pp. 50-51; Eric Labs, "Beyond Victory: Offensive Realism and Expansion of War Aims," *Security Studies* 6, no. 4 (summer 1997): 7-17; Andrew Kydd, "Sheep in Sheep's Clothing: Why Security Seekers Do Not Fight Each Other," *Security Studies* 7, no. 1 (autumn 1997): 114-54; and Stephen M. Walt, "International Relations: One World, Many Theories," *Foreign Policy*, no. 110 (spring 1998): 29-47. A similar, although slightly more expansive, division of the realist paradigm can be found in Stephen G. Brooks, "Dueling Realisms," *International Organizations* 51, no. 3 (summer 1997): 445-77. One of the earliest authors to suggest the difference is Charles L. Glaser, "Realists as Optimists: Cooperation as Self-Help," *International Security* 19, no. 2 (winter 1994/95): 50-90. This categorization is not meant to suggest that either school is entirely homogeneous. Rather, they share enough common ground to be grouped together usefully.

12. While there are many theories that fall into this category, a representative sample follows: Christopher Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion: Why New Great Powers Will Rise," *International Security* 17, no. 4 (spring 1993): 5-51; John J. Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe After the Cold War," *International Security* 15, no. 1 (summer 1990): 5-56; and Fareed Zakaria, "Realism and Domestic Politics: A Review Essay," *International Security* 17, no. 1 (summer 1992): 177-98.

reacted to this school by articulating a different view of what conclusions should be drawn from structural realism. They take a relatively optimistic view of international politics, suggesting security is plentiful and states need only make moderate attempts to secure themselves.[13] As a result, the international system is less competitive in general, and the chance that security dilemma-like situations will spark dangerous spirals is lower.[14]

Neither theory describes the absolute truth, and I suggest that both have a degree of logical consistency and are plausible descriptions of international politics at different times and among different actors. The debate thus calls our attention to finding out which theory is more appropriate for a given situation. To do that, we need to identify the underlying assumptions of each, and see where and when those might best represent reality. Unfortunately, there is no single list that makes clear the different assumptions of offensive and defensive realism.[15] I look forward to further debate on this issue and to a commonly agreed upon formalization of the differences between the two forms of realism. Until then, I propose the following.

There are two major assumptions that distinguish the defensive realist argument from its foil, offensive realism. First, defensive realists focus on the *role of defense dominance in mitigating competition over relative gains.*[16] The 'balance' between offensive and defensive

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13. For just a few of many possible examples of defensive realists, see Glaser, "Realists as Optimists"; Charles Glaser, "Correspondence: Current Gains and Future Outcomes," *International Security* 21, no. 4 (spring 1997): 186-93; Stephen Van Evera, "Primed for Peace: Europe after the Cold War," in *The Cold War and After: Prospects for Peace*, ed. Sean Lynn-Jones (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991), 193-245; Walt, *Origins of Alliances*; Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*; and Robert Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 30, no. 2 (1978).

14. Defensive realist might be further subdivided along the question that this raises, to wit: "what causes conflict". Some find the cause in pervasive misperceptions, see Stephen Van Evera, *Causes of War: Power and the Roots of Conflict* (Ithaca, NJ: Cornell University Press, 1999). Others argue that while in general security is plentiful, there are (specifiable) circumstances when that is not the case. For an example of economic variables (expectations of future gains from trade) in this context, see Dale Copeland, "Economic Interdependence and War: A Theory of Trade Expectations," *International Security* 20, no. 4 (spring 1996): 5-41. At a more general level, an attempt to describe some of these different variables categorically can be found in Glenn Snyder, "Process Variables in Neorealist Theory," *Security Studies* 5, no. 3 (spring 1996): 167-92. It is important to note that whatever these authors see to be the cause of (relatively rare) conflict, they are compatible with (and generally share) the two assumptions that I identify below.

15. See footnote 11 for a number of works that try to summarize these bodies of literature.

16. There is an enormous, and by no mean monolithic, literature on the Offense-Defense issues. Many authors find these concepts to be useful for international relations theory: see Jervis, *Perception and Misperception*; George Quester, *Offense and Defense in the International System* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1977); Thomas Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1966), Chapter 6: The Dynamics of Mutual Alarm; Bernard Brodie, "Technological Change, Strategic Doctrine, and Political Outcomes," in *Historical*

weapons and technologies is determined by the relative "amount of resources that a state must invest in offense to offset an adversary's investment in defense."[17] When defensive military technologies are dominant and when one can distinguish between defensive and offensive weapons and technologies, the security dilemma is mitigated.[18] In these situations, a state need not threaten others when it takes steps to ensure its own security, nor will states fear that adversaries' gains can easily and rapidly cumulate to present a threat. Under these circumstances, states can be less concerned with relative gains. Charles Glaser has distinguished between military capabilities, which always ought to be measured in relative terms, and the security of a nation.[19] If defense is dominant, then security may be assessed in absolute terms: An increase in an adversary's defensive assets does not threaten your own security, even if you make no changes.

Second, defensive realists believe that in general states have "little intrinsic interest in military conquest."[20] They argue "that lessons drawn from the historical record would teach states

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Dimensions of National Strategy Problems, ed. Klaus Knorr (University Press of Kansas, 1975), 263-306; Stephen Van Evera, "Offense, Defense, and the Causes of War," *International Security* 22, no. 4 (spring 1998): 5-43; to name a few. Others are less optimistic that this difference can be independently useful to the field. See T. H. E. Travers, "Technology, Tactics, and Morale: Jean de Bloch, the Boer War, and British Military Theory, 1900-1914," *Journal of Modern History* 51 (June 1979): 264-86; Jack Levy, "The Offensive/Defensive Balance of Military Technology: A Theoretical and Historical Analysis," *International Studies Quarterly* 28 (1984): 219-38; Jonathan Shimshoni, "Technology, Military Advantage, and World War I: A Case for Military Entrepreneurship," in *Military Strategy and the Origins of the First World War,* eds. Steven Miller, Sean Lynn-Jones, and Stephen Van Evera, rev. And exp. version (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); and Charles Glaser and Chaim Kaufmann, "What is the Offense-Defense Balance and How Can We Measure It?" *International Security* 22, no. 4 (spring 1998): 44-82.

17. Sean M. Lynn-Jones, "Offense-Defense Theory and Its Critics," *Security Studies* 4, no. 4 (summer 1995): 660-694. This is but one of many definitions, although I find it to be the most useful. This balance can refer to the 'objective' balance given by the actual nature of forces, geography, etc., or it can refer to the perception of that balance. While perceptions of this balance have sometimes deviated from reality significantly, I will focus on the objective balance throughout this paper. Obviously this has tremendous advantages in parsimony, but others have suggested the important role of the objective balance in influencing the perceptual balance. Further, the predictions of both the perceptual and objective varients of the theory are in harmony, further minumizing the dangers of focussing only on the latter. (On both these points see Stephen Van Evera, "Correspondence: Taking Offense at Offense-Defense Theory," *International Seuciry* 23, no. 3 (winter 1998/99): 198.)

18. Jervis, *Perception and Misperception*. It is this contingency that leads Glaser to refer to defensive realism as "contingent realism". Glaser, "Realists as Optimists."

19. Glaser, "Correspondence: Current Gains and Future Outcomes." Although the relative gains debate came out of a dialogue between neorealists and neoliberal institutionalists, it has seeped into the defensive vs. offensive debate within realism. Highlighting this important variable has been useful; occasionally, academic debate does bring forth important insights. This debate was begun in Joseph Grieco, "Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation: a Realist Critique of the Newest Liberal Institutionalism", *International Organization* 42, no. 3 (summer 1988): 485-507; and Robert Powell, "Absolute and Relative Gain in International Relations Theory," *American Political Science Review* 85, no. 4 (December 1991). It has been most recently advanced in John Matthews, III, "Current Gains and Future Outcomes: When Cumulative Relative Gains Matter," *International Security* 21, no. 1 (summer 1996): 112-46.

20. Walt, "International Relations," 37.

that attempts at hegemony always face balancing, that aggression always meets resistance, [and] that the costs of expansion eventually exceed its benefits. . . . The cumulative effect of these repeated lessons, according to defensive realists, leads states to recognize that the best course is the pursuit of moderate aims and minimal security."[21] This '*socialization against aggression' effect* leads states to avoid aggressive policies and engage in restrained behavior in the pursuit of their own security.

In contrast to these points, offensive realists would place little stock in the socialization effect. They further believe the world to be characterized by relatively offensive technology and geography in general, leading to intense conflict over relative gains for most nations.

Understanding Socialization

Before moving on to discuss the implications of these factors on states' behaviors, I discuss further the nature of this socialization against aggression effect. Several concerns are of merit. First, international anarchy imposes many lessons on states. Why should we necessarily believe that those suggested by defensive realists will be better learned than others? Second, what are the means by which this socialization exerts its influence, specifically? Third, what causes this socialization to persist over time? Each will be discussed in turn.

All variants of realism posit some form of socialization. Waltz wrote of the pressures for military emulation.[22] For him, the pressures of international anarchy force a 'sameness' in the component states with regard to weapons and even strategies.[23] One theorist writes of this:

> War, once again, is the ultimate form in which structure tests and selects successful institutions or technologies. States are socialized in an environment of multiple alternative institutions or technologies. Structure predisposes them to choose the most effective and successful as long as they wish to remain competitive.[24]

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21. Frankel, "Restating the Realist Case," xvii.

22. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 124-27 discusses it disjointedly. For a more detailed and logically structured examination that builds on this, see João Resende-Santos, "Anarchy and the Emulation of Military Systems: Military Organization and the Technology in South America, 1870-1930," *Security Studies* 5, no. 3 (spring 1996): 193-260. I am indebted to an anonymous reviewer for raising this point.

23. Note that in order to come to this conclusion, one must also assume that states are risk adverse, and prefer to use proven strategies rather than innovate on their own.

24. Resende-Santos, "Anarchy and the Emulation of Military Systems," 209.

In addition to strategic or tactical lessons about how to win or deter wars, the system also sends signals regarding geopolitical aims: "Expanding hegemons will be opposed and stopped."[25] Clearly these two sorts of lessons are not necessarily contradictory, and states may internalize both. Furthermore, both rely on similar pedagogical means: the dangers of losing a war.[26] It seems obvious that for both sorts of lesson, the *clearer* the signal is sent by the international system, the more likely it is to be learned. Thus, if one particular military technology shows it is superior in a wide range of conflicts, that is very likely to be emulated by other states. Similarly, if the state *itself* 'gets balanced' by others in the system, it is likely to understand that lesson well. It is worth noting that, while the system imposes these lessons, the recipients are individual states. All states will be subject to them, but not necessarily to similar degrees.[27]

The nature of the pertinent lessons addressed here is socialization against aggression. Such lessons occur when aggression or expansion (be it aimed toward hegemony or otherwise) results in balancing behavior by other states and eventual defeat for the aggressor. The more costly the defeat, the stronger is the lesson. Thus, the lessons are against aggression and expansion. However, rarely will states admit to having 'aggressive intent'. Instead, expansion or aggression is often defended as 'necessary for self-defense,' 'merely pre-emptive', or 'a response to prior aggression against us.' The lesson provided may be a bit murkier in cases where it is difficult to objectively separate out expansionists from status quo powers or where that distinction is deliberately concealed. In extreme cases, any assertive policy might be viewed as provoking retaliatory balancing and thus will be socialized against.[28]

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25. Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine*, 68.

26. The punishment can take the form of political rhetoric or economic sanction, but in the extreme, it is clear that military action is the final danger.

27. Again, my focus is on the socialization of individual states against aggression, but the point is precisely analogous to that made by those who study the differences in rates and degree of socialization

28. My own view is that such extreme cases are rather common. Labels of aggressors are applied to only a few states universally: Nazi Germany is one clear example. Nearly every other example (modern day Iraq, WWII Japan, cold war Russia, Israel in 1967, etc.) provokes debate to a greater or lesser extent (although the first three deserve the label in my mind). The existence of these debates strengthens, rather than diminishes, the socialization effect. If even moderately assertive policies, that are undertaken for seemingly defensible reasons, provoke retaliation, then foreign policy activism ought be very limited.

What does it mean for a 'state' to 'learn' a lesson? "A nation as such is obviously not an empirical thing. A nation as such cannot be seen."[29] We use the terms 'state' and 'nation' as shorthand to refer to a set of actors working within a given institutional system. Thus, the learning that this socialization effect posits could reside in either these actors or institutions.[30] Either of these might be able to learn in a more direct sense. For the actors (people), directly experiencing events could easily lead to collective learning and might change their beliefs, preferences, goals, or perceptions. Beyond the life span of a generation of actors, such learned lessons will have to reside in the culture if they are to persist. For institutions, these can be shaped by the international system when the nation is 'socialized' so as to constrain state behavior. (Again, either of these sorts of learning could occur with regard to lessons on efficacious technology or strategies in addition to the lessons of concern for this paper.[31])

Finally, should we expect this socialization to persist over time? Anything that can be learned can certainly be unlearned. Some factors, however, will make a given nation's socialization more likely to last: If national institutions are changed by the socialization and are minimally malleable thereafter, we should expect these effects to persist. If the culture was deeply affected by the socialization, we should expect that too to be slow to change. (Of course cultures change, but if 'culture' is worth studying at all, then at least we should concede that it will lead to some 'stickiness' in such change.[32]) Finally, we must also consider what sorts of new events or circumstances will be most likely to cause a change in this socialization. The scale of such events should compare favorably with that of the events that caused the socialization initially.

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29. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 117.

30. For our purposes here, the relevant actors are limited to those who play a role in foreign policy making. In general, this would include only foreign policy elites, although in democracies, we might also be concerned with the electorate.

31. Indeed, it is learning of the latter sort that is described in Resende-Santos, "Anarchy and the Emulation of Military Systems." See p. 198 and the cases in particular.

32. I take an essentially 'materialist' view of culture; that is, culture evolves in response to changes in material circumstances and tangible events. For a compatible view, see Douglass North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990). For a definitive statement of the antithetic view, see Marshall Sahlins, *Culture and Practical Reason* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976).) In my view, culture changes slowly and thus results in a lag in social perceptions. On the merits of viewing culture as explaining such lags in the context of security studies, see contributions by John Duffield and Micheal Desch in

Systemic pressures condition states against aggression. Nations—through their constitutive peoples and institutions—can internalize these lessons, although there is no reason to expect every state to do so equally or perpetually. Defensive realists suggest this socialization, coupled with defense dominance in some dyads, will have profound affects on international relations there. We now turn to these effects.

First Order Effects: What Does Defensive Realism Imply for Great Power Foreign Policy?

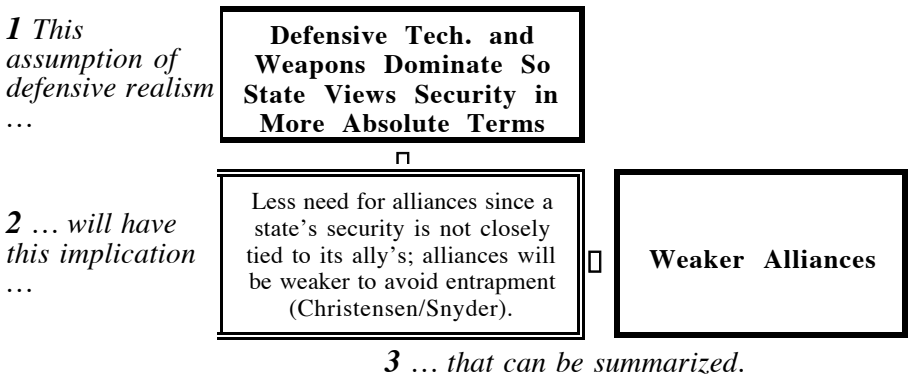
The most studied form of balancing policy is alliance behavior. Glen Snyder distinguishes between two pathologies in alliance behavior: abandonment and entrapment.[33] Thomas Christensen and Jack Snyder incorporate the role of defense dominance into predictions about these types of alliance behavior. They argue that in periods of multipolarity, a perception of increased offense dominance leads to heightened dangers from entrapment whereas a perception of defense dominance leads to abandonment.[34] Put another way, the external balancing behavior is not strong enough for the smooth operation of the balance of power in times of defense dominance, but too strong in times of offense dominance. This is summarized in what will be a useful format in the chart below:

"Correspondence: Isms and Schisms: Culturalism versus Realism in Security Studies," *International Security* 24, no. 1 (summer 1999): particularly pp. 160, 175-78.

33. Glenn Snyder, "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics," *World Politics* 36, no. 3 (July 1984): 466-67. Waltz made brief reference to these as well: Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 67, 167-69.

34. Thomas Christensen and Jack Snyder, "Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks: Predicting Alliance Patterns in Multipolarity," *International Organization* 44, no. 2 (spring 1990): 137-168. Note that while they use slightly different terminology (chain ganging and buck passing) from that in Snyder, "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics," the phenomena they describe are the same.

One Implication of Defensive Realism for Balancing Policies



We can expand on these conclusions regarding balancing in two regards. First, Christensen and Snyder trace the impact only of defense dominance on alliance behavior; we should also consider the impact of the other assumption of defensive realism—the socialization against aggression effect. Second, balancing can occur in many realms: Waltz writes of both internal and external balancing efforts.[35] Christensen and Snyder consider only external balancing behavior, and indeed only one form (albeit the most important form) of that behavior—alliance policy.

The chart below thus expands in these two dimensions. It outlines a half dozen implications of the two central assumptions of defensive realism. (Obviously there are likely many more implications of each assumption. However, for my purposes here, I am only interested in those that bear on the nature of the balancing policy pursued by the state.) It also groups these implications into three categories that will be conceptually convenient below.

35. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 168.

Categorizing the Implications of Defensive Realism on Balancing Policies

1 These two assumptions of defensive realism …

Socialization Effects of International System against Aggression	**Defensive Tech. and Weapons Dominate So State Views Security in More Absolute Terms**	
Socialized states will recognize that strong alliances provoke counter-alliances, and threaten others.[36]	Less need for alliances since a state's security is not closely tied to its ally's; alliances will be weaker to avoid entrapment (Christensen/Snyder).	**Fewer, Weaker Alliances**
Socialized states understand that broad containment policies lead to states feeling surrounded.	State need not concern itself with adversary's gains in peripheral areas and issues.	**Narrow Competition, No Containment**
Socialized states know that their own offensive strategies will signal offensive intent to adversaries.	Offensive strategies will be exceedingly expensive.[37]	**Preference against Offensive Strategies**

2 … will have these six policy implications …

3 … that can be summarized.

To generalize this even further, we might usefully find a term that captures the three categories on the right in one heading. Thus, I introduce the term 'circumscribed balancing', defined as a propensity to avoid strong countervailing alliances, to ignore an opponent's growth in peripheral geographic and issue-areas, and to avoid offensive strategies.[38]

Defining Assertive versus Circumscribed Balancing

Some balancing policies seem, by their nature, more 'assertive,' 'active,' or 'aggressive' while others seem far more 'circumscribed,' 'passive,' and 'restrained.' Each of the three categories on the right of the above chart exemplifies this latter sort. They each fall intuitively

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36. Some might argue that a 'defensive alliance' would be unlikely to threaten a potential adversary. While seemingly plausible, I believe that upon closer examination this is false. For instance, NATO during the Cold War was essentially a defensive alliance, yet it was quite threatening to the Soviets. There are some parallels between this issue and debates on capability versus intent. A defensive alliance is defensive in its intent. However, if it is also a strong alliance, as I have defined such an alliance above, the capabilities of the two states in the alliance will be bolstered. States tend to plan on the basis of their potential adversary's capabilities, not intents. Nevertheless the whole issue of 'defensive alliances' is ripe for additional research.

37. A related point is discussed in Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine*, 232-35. He also notes the system impact of this point, as discussed below in note 49.

38. That is, I am simply putting a label on a group of implication of defensive realism. While I am sensitive to concerns about 'jargon proliferation', I do find this term to capture the intuitive flavor of the various three policies involved. Further, this set of foreign policy implications of the defensive realist argument has not been expounded before and has important implications as discussed in the following section. Obviously, there are similarities between this concept and 'abandonment' or 'buck passing'. However, either of those latter terms is narrower in two senses. First, they focus on alliance policy, whereas circumscribed balancing addresses two additional areas. Second,

under the term 'circumscribed balancing,' to be distinguished from 'assertive balancing'. To be precise about this definition, 'circumscribed balancing' policies are defined as those that meet the following criteria:

1. The propensity to avoid **strong, countervailing alliances** and to avoid in particular durable, formal, and tight alliances. This factor is already discussed in similar terms within the realist literature. There is a range of activities from alignment, through ententes, to formal alliance. Further, formal alliances can be more militarized and integrated or less so (that is, more like NATO or more like the Franco-Russian Alliance of 1911).
2. The **narrowness** (as opposed to comprehensiveness) with which one state counters its opponent's growth in other geographic (or functional) areas. Assertive balancers engage, oppose, and react to their opponent's growth in every area and dimension. This was the case in the Cold War for both the United States and the Soviet Union. Through policies of 'containment,' the United States worked to match or roll back Soviet gains wherever they might occur: the Middle East, Indochina, Latin America, space, etc. Similarly, the United States immediately followed Soviet advances in nuclear missiles. American technological advances in fighters led to substantial R&D efforts in the same area by Moscow. We could also imagine countermeasures aimed at not only at responding to military growth, but also technical or economic (mercantile) gains.[39] Circumscribed balancers are less worried about these 'peripheral' areas and issues, but rather concern themselves only with the relevant bilateral military balance, narrowly defined.
3. The avoidance of **offensive strategies and capabilities** (including punishment/deterrent based[40]) in favor of defensive strategies. When states choose to use the current technology for relatively non-offensive capabilities and strategies, I refer to them as more circumscribed balancers.

If the opposite of the above criteria hold true, a nation would be characterized as a relatively assertive balancer. These should be understood as 'relative' concepts.

Since this definition was inspired by the implications of defensive realism, it should come as no surprise that it is entirely consistent with that theory. The first two criteria are fairly straightforward. First, the propensity to avoid countervailing alliances simply operationalizes factors relevant to the distinction between entrapment and abandonment (or chain-ganging and buck passing) put forth by Snyder and predicted by Christensen and Snyder. Second, the narrowness or comprehensiveness of balancing is a direct extension of the first criterion to the area of internal balancing. Comprehensiveness is prescribed under offensive realism but proscribed under defensive realism. Under offensive realism, an adversary's economic gain puts you at risk.

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both trace their roots to defense dominance. Circumscribed balancing allows consideration of socialization, another important element in determining foreign policy.

39. Eric Heginbotham and Richard J. Samuels, "Mercantile Realism and Japanese Foreign Policy," *International Security* 22, no. 4 (spring 1998): 171-203.

40. Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine* distinguishes among three strategies: offensive, defensive, and deterrent. I am including deterrent strategies with offensive since I am discussing 'extended deterrence' and Posen was discussing direct deterrence. While both extended and direct deterrence share the goal of 'hurting' the enemy (imposing costs), direct deterrence can do so simply by hurting the invading forces. Extended deterrence either

Under defensive realism, your (absolute) security is unaffected by this. Your defensive advantages make any increases in your adversary's capabilities irrelevant. Furthermore, because defense is dominant, your discount rate is lower, thereby furthering your interest in long term economic gains over short term military expenditures.[41] And—based on your socialization in the international system—you recognize that your own attempts to assertively compete with your adversary will likely lead to balancing by others against you.

With regard to the third criterion—avoidance of offensive strategies and capabilities—states will enhance their capability to punish aggressors when they expect to face expansionist adversaries who they will need to contain. If an adversary's growth is not at your direct expense, but is still threatening, you will want punishment capabilities to deter your adversary from such an action. This is the case for offensive realists: An adversary's growth anywhere is dangerous to me. (On this point, there is reason to believe that states can choose among a range of strategies here; that is, they are not limited to offensive or defensive *strategies* by the balance between offensive and defensive *technologies*—this choice does come at a cost, however.[42])

Thus, to reiterate: the typology of assertive and circumscribed balancing provides a useful means to distinguish between sets of disparate balancing policies that all can be traced back to a common theoretical root, offensive or defensive realism. The latter relies on two key assumptions. These assumptions have several implications that bear on various types of balancing behavior. Circumscribed balancing is a simple label to describe these implications. Defensive realism predicts circumscribed balancing by definition.

Second Order Effects: What Does This Mean for the System

The distinction between assertive and circumscribed balancing would be merely of descriptive interest (if even that) were it to have no real world implications. However,

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requires a capability to attack an adversary's homeland or to hurt its forces operating somewhere abroad. Either of these capabilities appears to me to be relatively 'offensive'.

41. For related discussions see Brooks, "Dueling Realisms," 458-59 and Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, *The War Trap* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1981).

circumscribed balancing does not lead to many of the 'benefits' that a 'balance of power system'[43] is reputed to supply. Returning to the classic works in the international relations field, many argue that as an aggregate function of the balancing policies of individual states, the international system will exhibit some degree of stability. Morgenthau speaks of a "function of the balance of power to preserve the independence of weak nations." Waltz's final chapter focuses on the ability of states (great powers in general, and superpowers in particular) to 'manage' international affairs, including "the transforming or maintaining of the system, the preservation of peace, and the management of common economic and other problems."[44] More recently, one realist has written of the value of the balance of power for the U.S.: "In a multipolar world the United States could be confident that effective balancing would occur because to ensure their survival, other states have the incentive to balance against geographically proximate rivals."[45] Another has written, "Because those who seek to dominate others will attract widespread opposition, status quo states can take a relatively sanguine view of threats. . . . Moreover, if balancing is the norm and if statesmen understand this tendency, aggression will be discouraged because those who contemplate it will anticipate resistance."[46]

To get these beneficial results, *to get balance in any meaningful sense for the system rather than for a single dyad*, scholars assume that balancing behavior will be of the more assertive sort. A great power that is a circumscribed balancer presents little threat to other great powers. The chances of dangerous misperceptions and spirals will be minimized. Even expansionary great powers, so long as they do not attack the circumscribed balancer directly, will be relatively safe. However, that raises a separate set of concerns. Once the possibility for circumscribed balancing

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42. For a recent argument that communicating benign intentions in this way is quite feasible, see Kydd, "Sheep in Sheep's Clothing," 114-54. For more general arguments about choosing offensive strategies, see the latter half of footnote 16.

43. That is, I, with Claude, have a conception of the balance of power as a system. Inis L. Claude, Jr., *Power and International Relations* (New York: Random House, 1962), 20-25, 41. On other meanings of 'balance of power' as distributions of power or policies aimed at balanced power, see *ibid*., 13-20.

44. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*, 198 and Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 199.

45. Christopher Layne, "From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing: America's Future Grand Strategy," *International Security* 22, no. 1 (summer 1997): 117.

46. Walt, *Origin of Alliances*, 27.

is considered, the system *as a whole* looks much less stable:[47] While peace will still be ensured between the great powers, some of them may have no incentive to counter aggressive moves against others. In systems or regions with at least one great power engaging in circumscribed balancing, the periphery will simply become much more violent.[48] This will be the case for three reasons: Fewer alliances with small and middle powers will exist, those alliances will be weaker, and circumscribed balancers will not necessarily develop the capability to intervene in areas other than their own territory. Expansionist great powers will be able to intervene in the periphery at will because status quo great powers will lack both the intent and capability to oppose them.[49] (In contrast, assertive balancers would be more willing to check expansion that is not directly aimed at themselves. They will not fear provoking counterbalancing against themselves, and they will recognize that they have the capabilities and interest to play a role here.) For small powers looking for support, a great power engaged in circumscribed balancing is neither an attractive nor willing ally. Rather, the small power will be forced to fight its own battles (and likely lose them) or bandwagon with any expansionist power that threatens it. Status quo great powers facing a potential aggressor will also be forced to do so alone, without the help of the circumscribed balancer. While a status quo power is less likely to face defeat on its own than a small power, it will face higher costs in balancing than if the circumscribed balancer had played a role.

To be explicit, different nations will face different security environments and will do so with different historical memories socializing them. While some of the scholars in the defensive

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47. I use the term system here to denote either the global system, or in cases where regional affairs can be analyzed more or less in isolation of extra-regional players, to regional systems.

48. However, if a region or system is made up entirely of great powers engaged in circumscribed balancing, conflict will be lower in all regards.

49. Note, this is quite similar to the perception of defense dominance in a military sense leading to difficulties in the *capabilities* for following through with alliance commitments, e.g., pre-WWII French relations with her Eastern European allies. (For discussions on this see A.J.P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1961, 1996), 155-56; John Mearsheimer, *Conventional Deterrence* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), 68-76; Posen, *Sources of Military Doctrine*, 126-130; and P.M.H. Bell, *The Origins of the Second World War in Europe* (New York: Longman Group Limited, 1986), 233). However, I will also consider the other factors in the defensive realism school, those of socialization against assertive security policies and conceiving of national goals as being security satisfying rather than power maximizing. Both of these affect the *intent* to follow through on, and even to make, alliance commitments. This is in contrast to the WWII case where France clearly identified its security with that of its allies Poland and Czechoslovakia. France's security was not viewed in any 'absolute' sense and it was not socialization that restrained her.

realist literature limit their discussions to international level theorizing, most do not feel so constrained.[50] I join the latter group in sacrificing a little parsimony for what I believe to be a substantial payoff in terms of explanatory power. The infamous levels of analysis are useful for categorizing theories and describing the scope of theories.[51] However, there is no reason that theories developed at one level cannot be combined with those of other levels.[52] I will apply the theory of circumscribed balancing to individual states, looking at the circumstances that they find themselves in. When a state is located in a defense dominant techno-geographic situation, and when it has been socialized in its culture and governing institutions against aggression, I predict it will act as a circumscribed balancer.

It is generally true that the balance of power must eventually prevail, as it is that wars eventually end. Both these truisms overlook the more pressing questions of 'how long until then?' and 'at what cost?' I address these questions by explaining a set of conditions and behaviors that will impede the tendency toward balance in particular parts the system. When any state finds itself in a situation that is described by the two assumptions of defensive realism, it will engage in circumscribed balancing. I highlight the fact that while defensive realism and circumscribed balancing lead to fewer wars because of spirals between great powers, they may well lead to (1) more isolationist-minded *status quo* great powers with less power projection capabilities, (2) fewer and weaker alliances, and (3) thus, added dangers to peripheral powers that are unable to balance internally. (Note each of these points stands in contrast to offensive realism, which would predict the opposite.) The same factors that make defensive realists 'optimistic'[53] vis-a-vis great power conflict also have under-appreciated pessimistic news for the periphery. I now shift to examine the applicability of this theoretic approach. To presage the remainder of my argument, since Japan fits

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50 To choose just a few, each of whom is generally identified as a defensive realist: Walt, *Origins of Alliances*; Thomas Christensen, *Useful Adversaries: Grand Strategy, Domestic Mobilization, and Sino-American Conflict, 1947-58* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996); and Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).

51. Kenneth Waltz, *Man, the State, and War: a Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954), 12.

52. Indeed the value of such an approach is noted by Waltz (ibid., 225) and Jervis, *Perception and Misperception*, 17.

53. Glaser, "Realists as Optimists."

the bill for a state that is very likely to live in defensive realist circumstances, her peripheral neighbors should be worried. If the United States cares about those neighbors, then so should she.[54]

JAPAN, THE CIRCUMSCRIBED BALANCER

We expect a nation to act more as a circumscribed balancer the more it finds itself in an international situation described by defensive realists: the degree to which the state has been socialized against assertive foreign policies and the degree to which defense dominates, thus allowing the state to pursue more security-satisfying rather than power-maximizing outcomes. Through attention to the empirics in both these areas, I argue below that Japan finds herself in a world best characterized by defensive realists. On the former, I argue that a country's own history will have strong predictive power on what lessons a state might learn. It is easier to learn from your own mistakes than from those made by others. Japan, more than perhaps any other country, has reason to be 'socialized' against assertive defense policies. On the second factor, the offense-defense balance should be measured for a particular dyad and at a particular time (and thus level of technology). Japan finds itself in a highly defense dominant situation in geostrategic terms given the technology of the day. As a result of both these factors Japan is likely to behave as a circumscribed balancer.

Defense Dominance—Japan Is Very Secure Militarily

This section will argue that Japan is in a defense dominant situation and that its military security should be measured in absolute terms over the next several decades. Japan's security will

54. To be methodologically honest, I have developed my thinking about the implications of defensive realism for circumscribed balancing policies with an eye towards applying it to current Japanese foreign policy. Thus, this study should not be considered a 'test' of these theoretical ideas. That will have to await work with less of an initial bias. I do, however, find quite a bit of explanatory value in these ideas for the case of Japan. Since I find international security theory to be immature, I do not hesitate to use this extension of realist theory in making policy prescriptions later in the paper. Our national leaders need to make decisions today; they should be able to do so with whatever information they find useful. I look forward to further opportunities to 'test' these theories in a more methodologically robust setting.

not be compromised by changes within Chinese military forces. This means that Japan is likely to live in the world described by defensive realists.[55]

This section will ignore any potential U.S. support for Japan in assessing the degree of Japanese security. This is not because abrogation of the alliance is expected any time soon, but because this is the more challenging assumption: if Japan is secure from China in the absence of the United States, then it will be even more secure with the Seventh Fleet based in Yokosuka. The issue at hand is the geostrategic environment facing Japan, not the United States. It would be wrong to consider the role of the alliance—itself a policy outcome—when evaluating the underlying situation that Japan finds itself in while making policy. The alliance is discussed in a later section, when Japanese policy is assessed.

While Japan is governed by a 'peace constitution' and calls its military a Self-Defense Force (SDF), we should not lose sight of its substantial capabilities. What was developed as "an underwater targeting project"[56] is indeed a potent attack submarine force; its new "disaster relief ship"[57] would be called an amphibious assault ship in any other navy. Japan's potent air defense destroyers are commonly called "escort ships" and its tanks referred to as "special vehicles" in domestic discourse. Japan's remarkable propensity for Orwellian 'doublespeak' should not conceal her true capabilities. Tokyo is among the world's top military spenders, even while claiming to hold its relative spending to approximately 1% of GDP. However, Japan defines military spending rather narrowly, thus understating its military spending relative to most Western nations. Harmonizing Japanese figures with Western statistical practices leads to an increase of

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55. It should go without saying that if the above is true—if Japan is secure from China—it will also be immune from pressure from China to bandwagon.

56. "Future Japanese Submarine Technology Discussed," *Boei Gijutsu Janaru*, September 1997, 4-19, in FBIS-EAS-97-314, 11 November 1997.

57. Author's interview with senior Japanese journalist, November 1996. Also note that this disaster relief role is commonly emphasized in Japanese works on the Navy. See for instance, Toshio Hatta, "Japanese Design Seen in Maritime Self Defense Force Ships; Ships Reflecting Advanced Technology and Special Duties!", *Gunji Kenkyu*, August 1996, 72-87, in FBIS-JST-96-040. If this role is the true goal of this large transport it is unclear why it needs to be equipped with (indeed designed around) the LCAC hovercraft whose main use is rapid reinforcements of assault teams.

nearly 50 percent in spending.[58] Thus, its 1998 spending on defense and related items was nearly $49 billion at 1998 exchange rates (and some 40 percent higher if 1996 exchange rates are used).[59] This figure puts Japan well ahead of Britain, France, and China, and only slightly behind Russia, the world's second largest overall spender on defense.

Island nations in general are in relatively secure geographic positions, especially since the advent of airpower. In a comprehensive review of offense-defense theory, one scholar writes: "Conquest is harder when geography insulates states from invasion or strangulation. Hence conquest is hindered when national borders coincide with oceans…"[60] (This scholar equates difficulty of conquest and defense dominance.[61]) I would go further to argue that technologies that make crossing those oceans more difficult similarly enhance defense. This is achieved by weapons and technologies that allow for the control of local airspace (e.g., the potency of ground based tactical air assets) and by those that ease denial of maritime approaches (e.g., anti-shipping cruise missiles). Japan is surrounded by ocean, and today's technology makes crossing that ocean risky indeed.[62]

Japan's primary security concerns are the defense of its home islands and the ability to prevent an adversary from cutting off its sea-lanes (preventing 'invasion' and 'strangulation,' in the terms used above). Japan has the largest destroyer force in the Pacific centered around four of the most advanced guided missile cruisers in any ocean. Its submarine force is regarded as the best in the region. It already maintains the most potent air force in the region, and will soon field advanced AWACS planes to guide several new squadrons of F-2 strike fighters. These are the most capable fighters in Japan's inventory and the region—with the exception of the newest American planes. Deployment of the first squadron of the F-2s will be complete by the end of the

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58. International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), *The Military Balance, 1995/96* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 173.

59. International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), *The Military Balance, 1998/99* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 167 and 183.

60. Van Evera, *Causes of War*, 163.

61. *Ibid*., ftnt. 1.

62. Standoff, precision guided munitions coupled with long range sensor technology make this the case. Japan has invested heavily in both these technologies, as discussed below.

decade, with at least a second squadron soon to follow. The F-2s, and the F-15s they complement, can be armed with a mix of air-to-air and air-to-surface missiles that are predominantly produced in Japan.[63] The planes can be flown from airbases some 1000 miles to the southwest and 750 miles to the south of Tokyo (in Okinawa and Iwo Jima, respectively) if need be, giving Japan significant strategic depth.

A common bogeyman for Japan historically has been the threat of blockade. Without even considering its surface ship assets, the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force can use 100 P-3Cs (very advanced anti-submarine patrol planes) and another one hundred advanced anti-submarine helicopters to counter the 5-10 submarines that the Chinese might be able to put in the field for such an adventure.[64] Again, Japan's naval vessels can rely on a wide range of high quality, domestically produced weaponry supplemented by a significant stockpile of advanced American imports.[65] To counter the threat of sea mines, Tokyo can rely on a modern mine warfare fleet (half of which is less than a decade old) that has a third more ships than the entire U.S. Navy's mine fleet.

At present an adversary's navy entering Japanese waters would suffer dearly, and all but the most capable navies would find themselves outgunned anywhere in the Western Pacific. Japan

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63. For air-launched anti-shipping missiles, Japan uses the ASM-1 and ASM-2, both designed and built by Mitsubishi. The latter is reputed to be quite capable. Ground based air-defense needs are secured adequately by domestic manufacture of Patriot missiles under license, also by Mitsubishi. Air-to-air missiles are a mix: several variants of the AIM-9 are produced domestically, and the imported AIM-7s have been procured in bulk. Currently, an AMRAAM variant is under development (XAAM-4), as well as an off-bore short-range dogfighting missile (XAAM-5). Japan's airforce will not face a shortage of ordinance. See Tony Cullen and Christopher Foss, *Jane's Land-Based Air Defense, 1996-97*, Ninth Edition (Alexandria, Virg.: Jane's Information Group, 1997), 287; Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *SIPRI Yearbook, 1998: Armaments, Disarmament, and International Security* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 341-42; and http://fas.org/man/dod-101/sys/missile/row/index.html.

64. The 62-boat offensive Chinese submarine fleet is plagued with problems. Fifty-three of them were designed more than three decades ago; the remaining nine boats are of mixed quality. Shortages of trained crews exacerbate these qualitative deficiencies.

65. Mitsubishi produces the Mk-46 torpedo (in wide use in the JMSDF) and the ASROC under license. An ADCAP-like torpedo was developed domestically. Sea Sparrow ship-to-air missiles are currently produced under license but will likely be replaced by a variant of the domestically developed XAAM-4 mentioned above. For ship-to-ship missiles, Japan relies on the very capable SSM-1b, produced again by Mitsubishi. Finally, these systems are rounded out with a stockpile of several hundred American Standard SM-2 long-range ship-to-air missiles. Tokyo's navy is well prepared for even extended combat. See Norman Friedman, *World Naval Weapons Systems, 1997-98* (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1997), 232-33, 423, and 678-79; A.D. Baker, III, *Combat Fleets of the World, 1998-99* (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1998), 413.

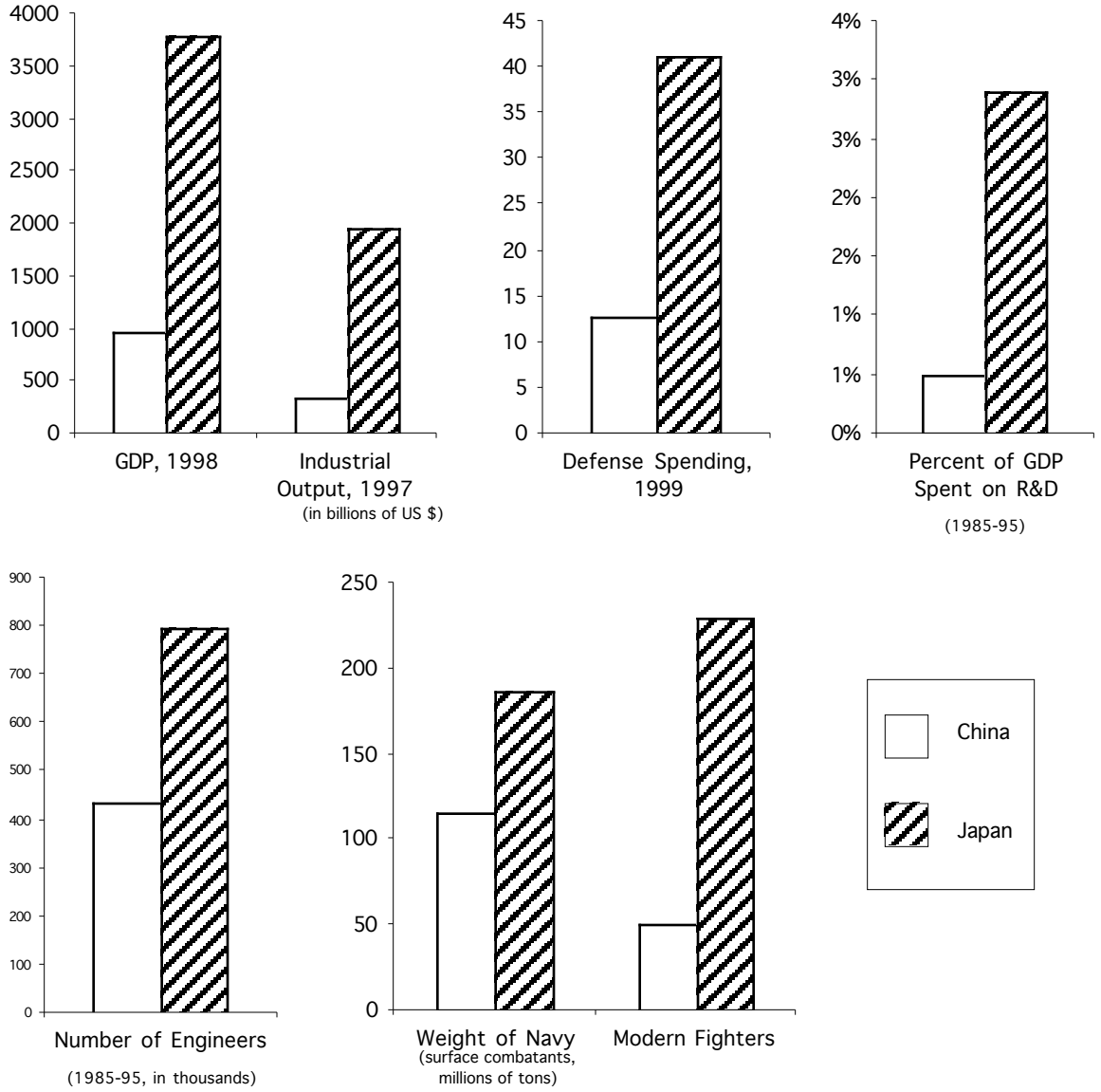
is immune from 'invasion' and very secure from 'strangulation' today. The large remaining question, of course, is whether China can threaten Japan in the near future.

Could China Threaten Japan Tomorrow?

If China continues on its rapid path of growth, will it convert wealth into aggressive military power?[66] Certainly, it is prudent for Japanese planners to consider such a possibility, but they need not be excessively concerned. The charts below summarize several important statistics suggestive of Japan's significant advantages over the mid- to long-range future.

66. Here I am making an assumption that China will remain a relatively unitary actor in world affairs. While this is by no means guaranteed (see "Fragile China: Affluent Regions Go Their Own Way" *Far East Economic Review*, 11 May 1995, 18-24 or Jack Goldstone, "The Coming Chinese Collapse," *Foreign Policy*, No. 99 (summer 1995): 35-52), it is a conservative assumption. If China does indeed fragment, there is even less reason to think that Japan could be threatened from some sub-China entity. Furthermore, for the purposes of this section, I am *assuming* a malevolent China because it is the more challenging (and therefore conservative), assumption. I make no attempt in this paper to *predict* Chinese intentions.

Some (Relatively) Durable Examples of Japan's Advantages over China[67]



Furthermore, there are a variety of military factors that will make it difficult for China to threaten Japan anytime in the near future—with or without the U.S.-Japan Alliance. First, although the Chinese military is quite large, it is technologically backward and is unlikely to improve substantially for some time. According to a recent study by the RAND Corporation:

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67. Chart data taken from the following sources: GDP from www.worldbank.org/data. Industrial Output from World Bank, *World Bank Indicators, 1997* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), Table 12. Percent of GDP spent on R&D and Number of Engineers from World Bank, *World Bank Indicators, 1999* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), Table 5-12. Military Spending and Modern Fighters (taken to be fourth generation or higher) from IISS, *Military Balance, 1999-2000*, 186-87, 191-92. Weight of navy from David T. Burbach, "World

> The People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) does not constitute a credible offensive threat against the United States or its Asian allies today, and this situation will not change dramatically over the coming decade. If anything, the PLAAF's overall capabilities relative to most of its rivals will diminish over the next ten years.[68]

Airpower is vital for the success of any attempt to project military force today.[69] This is especially true in naval conflicts, where high value and vulnerable assets face off across relatively terrain-free playing fields. Chinese deficiencies in this area bode of ill prospects for any adventurism on their part.

Nevertheless, it is certainly worthwhile to look further at the other forces available to the Chinese military. The Center for Naval Analysis argues that 2020 is the earliest China could develop a 'regional' navy (and this would be one that pales in comparison to the Japanese's of today).[70] According to Bates Gill and Taeho Kim, China's military industrial base has enormous problems. Its naval armaments are antiquated, based on 1950s and 1960s Soviet designs:

> Most importantly, the vessels themselves are poorly constructed and often do not meet modern standards of seaworthiness, so that even a significant upgrade of the ships through fitting of foreign weapons systems might not affect the long term survival of the vessels. According to one report, Thai recipients of these vessels determined them to be fit only for patrol work on coast guard duty.[71]

Similar problems plague the Chinese land-based systems.[72]

Fleet Tonnage, 1996," unpublished dataset, MIT Security Studies Program, Comparative Naval Strength Project, December 1997.

68. Kenneth W. Allen, Glenn Krumel, and Jonathan Pollack, *China's Air Force Enters the 21st Century* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, Project Air Force, 1995), xiii.

69. Kosovo would seem to make this case strongly, although some view it as a unique case. While it is true that the Gulf War did not prove that airpower cannot win wars by itself, the stronger lesson that ought to be learned from that conflict is that lack of airpower leaves a nation's entire force at the mercy of piecemeal attack by one's opponent at the time and place of his choosing. On the first point, see Robert Pape, *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), Chapter 7. On the second point, see Michael Gordon and General Bernard Trainor, *The General's War* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1995), 474; James A Winnefeld, Preston Niblack, Dana Johnson, *A League of Airmen: U.S. Air Power in the Gulf War* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 1994), 285ff; and Brig. Gen. Robert Scales, Jr., *Certain Victory: The U.S. Army in the Gulf War* (Washington: Brassey's, 1994), 368ff.

70. Christopher Yung, *People's War at Sea: Chinese Naval Power in the Twenty-First Century*, CRM 95-214 (Alexandria, Virg.: Center for Naval Analyses, March 1996).

71. See Bates Gill and Taeho Kim, *China's Arms Acquisitions from Abroad: A Quest for 'Superb and Secret Weapons*, SIPRI Research Report No. 11, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 103. On this issue more generally, see also Patrick Tyler, "China's Military Stumbles Even as Its Power Grows," *New York Times*, Tuesday, 3 December 1996, A1.

72. Gill and Kim, *China's Arms Acquisitions*, 104-05.

Second, there is a big difference between continental and maritime power.[73] China maintains a very large, albeit relatively unmechanized, army including over 2 million soldiers.[74] But this huge war making capability is only relevant if Chinese ground forces face Japanese ground forces. It is difficult to imagine such an instance. It is militarily inconceivable that Japan would again invade China. A number of reasons can be offered to support this point, any one of which is sufficient: China possess a large number of medium range nuclear weapons; China maintains nearly 7 times as many divisions as does Japan; and Japan only has enough amphibious shipping to support an attack of a single small brigade. On the other side, China can no more 'invade' Japan than it could credibly threaten to do so against Taiwan in April 1996, a much less powerful adversary.[75] Amphibious conflict heavily favors the defender; if ever there is an unambiguously defense dominant situation, that is it. China has trouble mounting combined maneuvers on a divisional scale and only has enough amphibious warfare ships to support an overseas invasion of a division or two. Moreover, Japan is dominant in the sea, where her interests are greatest, while China has traditionally been a continental power. Most of China's primary security concerns include contested borders with Vietnam, Russia, and India, all land borders (Taiwan and the Spratlys are, of course, the obvious exceptions). While some in Japan might feel threatened by the possibility of an embargo or amphibious attack, the military balance in these areas heavily favors Tokyo. This will not change substantively for several decades.[76]

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73. For a parallel discussion see, Robert Ross "The Geography of the Peace: East Asia in the Twenty First Century," *International Security* 23, no. 4 (spring 1999): 81-118.

74. China maintains on the books some 8800 tanks. However more than 6700 of these are the equivalent of the Soviet T-55 or older. The T-55 was first introduced in 1957. The remaining Chinese tanks number approximately 2000. According to current U.S. practice, this would be an appropriate number of tanks for 6 Heavy Armor Divisions, or 11 Infantry Divisions. China nominally fields some 95-100 divisions. IISS, *Military Balance, 1998/99*, 178. Additionally, at its recent 15th Party Congress, China has announced further cuts in its military manpower of some 500,000 soldiers. Matt Forney, "Private Party," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 2 October 1997, 21. On quality problems see "Defective Chinese ammunition," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 29 October 1997, 15.

75. Barbara Starr, "China 'lacks the ability to invade Taiwan'," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 14 February 1996; David Shambaugh, "Taiwan's Security: Maintaining Deterrence amid Political Accountability," *The China Quarterly*, no. 148 (December 1996): 1316-17; Rear Admiral Eric McVadon, ret., "PRC Exercises, Doctrine and Tactics toward Taiwan: The Naval Dimension," paper presented at "Conference on the People's Liberation Army," Coolfont, W. Vir., 6-8 September 1996.

76. This time period is consistent with both the RAND analysis of the Chinese airforce (Allen, Krumel, and Pollack, *China's Air Force*) and the CNA analysis of the navy (Yung, *People's War at Sea*) both cited above.

In contrast to the Chinese military's technical difficulties, Japan will continue to strengthen its military technological capabilities. Japanese spending on military R&D has been one of the fastest growing portions in the budget, and was at a record level in the FY1997 budget.[77] Additionally, the Japan Defense Agency has expressed strong interest in developing an indigenous naval patrol plane with enhanced surface strike capabilities.[78] As mentioned above, Japan has begun domestic production of a very capable fighter. Tokyo is rushing to put up four of its own spy satellites.[79] It has gained substantial experience in the production of advanced military hardware through its domestic assembly of advanced American systems such as the F-15, P-3C, and much of its Aegis cruisers. All of these factors suggest that the SDF will continue to maintain, and likely extend, its technological edge over the People's Liberation Army.

Above I have shown that based on the conventional military balance, Japan is quite secure from China. I now turn to two remaining potential problem areas between the Asian giants. One concerns China's nuclear capability. The other concerns the territorial dispute over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands.

Although nuclear weapons are the most potent military asset in the Chinese arsenal, there are reasons for the Japanese to avoid undue consternation over them. First, the delivery technologies of the Chinese weapons are relatively inaccurate. This would decrease their utility against point naval targets (i.e., a Japanese escort fleet),[80] although not against cities (counter-value targets). China will retain the option of destroying Japanese urban areas—and thereby, the power for nuclear blackmail. However, it is unclear what they would gain from such power. Indeed, it is often said that nuclear weapons are essentially defensive, useful only for preventing

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77. Although the defense budget as a whole was slated to grow by some 2.88 percent in FY97, the R&D portion of the budget will grew by 8.8 percent. Kensuke Ebata, "Japan seeks a bigger budget for R&D plans," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 13 November 1996, p. 17. While the R&D figures have come down somewhat since 1997, this represents primarily the shifting of major programs (such as the F-2 and OH-1) from development to procurement. IISS, *Military Balance, 1998/99*, 167.

78. The P-3C is currently manufactured in Japan by Kawasaki Heavy Industries on license from Lockheed-Martin. Takoka Shunji, "Kokusan Shohkaiki kohsoh no Zenyoh [The Full Story of the Plans for an Indigenous Patrol Airplane]," *Aera*, 12 February 1996.

79. Akinori Uchida, "Washington asks Tokyo to buy U.S. satellite," *The Daily Yomiuri*, 15 May 1999, 1.

80. For other limitations on the tactical use of Chinese nuclear weapons, see Alastair Iain Johnston, "China's New 'Old Thinking': The Concept of Limited Deterrence," *International Security* 20, no. 3 (winter 1995/96): 27-29.

another nation from taking certain actions. This sort of nuclear blackmail could certainly be used to deter Japanese involvement in crises in areas such as Taiwan or the South China Sea. But if it acts as a circumscribed balancer, Japan is unlikely to counter Chinese moves in these areas anyhow. On the other hand, nuclear weapons could be used or threatened in a compellence role against the core Japanese interest of preserving its own sovereignty. However, even this is unlikely to be viable for three reasons. First, compellence is much more difficult than deterrence.[81] Second, nuclear weapons are not particularly useful in paving the way for an invasion, since they irradiate the targeted area. Third, and most important, although Japan does not now possess an actual nuclear deterrent, it could very rapidly cross that threshold.[82] Indeed some view Japan's decision to pursue plutonium reprocessing, which seems substantially at odds with the economic rationale prevailing under current (or foreseeable) energy market conditions, as evidence that Japan maintains a 'virtual' nuclear deterrent.[83] Japan can easily couple its nuclear weapons technology with its advanced rocket program to create a viable missile based nuclear deterrent in short order.[84] Analysts in Beijing recognize this: "In general, Japan could within a few months be a nuclear superpower if the Japanese Government made the political decision."[85] While proliferation is rarely viewed as a positive outcome (an issue that is beyond the scope of this paper), the point here is that Japan has means at its disposal to ensure its own security in this issue-area even without reliance on the U.S. nuclear umbrella.

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81. Thomas Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (Yale University Press: New Haven, CT, 1966).

82. Selig Harrison, *Japan's Nuclear Future: The Plutonium Debate and East Asian Security* (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1996).

83. For a discussion of these issues, see *ibid*. Also see Eugene Skolnikoff, Tatsujiro Suzuki, and Kenneth Oye, "International Responses to Japanese Plutonium Programs," A Working Paper from the Center for International Studies, MIT, August 1996. Supporting the usability of Japanese reactor-grade (rather than weapons-grade), plutonium, see U.S. Department of Energy, "Nonproliferation and arms control assessment of weapons-usable fissile material storage and excess plutonium disposition alternatives," (Washington, DC: USDOE, January 1997), 39. For discussion of the merits of such a path, see comments by a Japanese Vice Minister from the JDA discussed in Nicole Gaouette, "In Japan, loose lips on nukes lose politician his job," *Christian Scientist Monitor*, 26 October 1999, 7.

84. Regarding recent plans to focus on more advanced rockets, see Calvin Sims, "Japan Drops Cornerstone Of Program For Rockets," *New York Times*, 10 December 1999, A6.

85. Gao Heng, "Future Military Trends," in Michael Pillsbury, ed., *Chinese Views of Future Warfare* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1997). Gao is described as "one of China's best 'connected' civilian analysts" by the book's editor.

The other outstanding issue between these two Asian giants concerns the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands. This small group of islands—claimed by both nations, but occupied by Japan—has recently been an issue of nationalist attention in both countries (and even more pronouncedly in Taiwan and Hong Kong). Some also believe that the islands sit over potentially rich oil fields. While this dispute may be a nationalist tinderbox in both Japan and China, Japan nevertheless has little to fear here. It has several options that it can use for dealing with this territorial dispute other than war. Equitable solutions that allow both sides to reap the benefits of any possible oil reserves can be arranged.[86] Indeed in the event China controlled the islands, Beijing would likely turn to a foreign firm to assist in developing any oil fields (as they are doing in the Spratlys). There is no reason that this firm could not be Japanese. Additionally, short of nuclear use by China, any conventional war over the islands would be won handily by the Japanese naval and air forces.

Both these issues—Chinese nuclear weapons and the uncertain status of the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands—are serious and potentially very problematic. There are no guarantees against miscalculation. Nonetheless there are grounds for optimism in each case based on reasonably strong disincentives for conflict. In every other area, Japan is quite simply very secure. China lacks the capability to threaten core Japanese interests today, and this will continue for the next several decades.

This section has supported the contention that Chinese-Japanese military relations are characterized by defense dominance, and that Japanese security can be thought of as essentially 'absolute' when facing the Chinese. Any change the Chinese can contemplate over the next several decades will not seriously threaten Japanese security.

The Socialization Effect—A Legacy of World War II

If any country has had grounds to learn that aggression does not pay, it is Japan. Because of its 1930s and 1940s foreign policy, Japan was bombed with atomic weapons and occupied. Its

86. See for instance, the methodology proposed for a related island dispute in David Denoon and Steven Brams, "Fair Division: A New Approach to the Spratly Islands Controversy," unpublished manuscript, New York University, October 1996. For Chinese willingness to pursue this sort of solution, see Xuetong Yan, "Guojia liyi de Panduan [Judgements about National Interest]," *Zhanlue yu Guanli [Strategy and Management]*, no. 3 (1996): 41.

constitution was rewritten. It has had foreign troops stationed on its territory for fifty years. The legacy of the atomic attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki has been profound and sustained. School children are still taken to the Hiroshima war museum in droves, and awareness of the gruesome brutality of that particular attack is commonplace in wide segments of Japanese society. Japan is a more likely candidate for 'socialization by the international system' than any other country.

Most scholars of modern Japan would support the contention that World War II has left a legacy of revulsion against an assertive military policy. The most comprehensive study of Japanese defense policy begins its section on Social Norms:

> Public attitudes reflect the depth of social learning which came with the disastrous loss of World War II and the American occupation. Many, although by no means all, studies of Japanese foreign policy credit public opinion with a substantial impact on security policy…The anti-militarist climate of opinion was generated by the disastrous outcome of World War II and reinforced by the policies of the American occupation.[87]

Another writes

> The particular lesson of World War II, which was engraved very deeply on the national psyche, is that Japan cannot achieve this necessary access to the world economy by the use of military force. The Japanese concluded, therefore, that they must avoid as much as possible any military role in international politics and that they must rely on peaceful, nonmilitary means to build their economy and to make a decent life for themselves.[88]

In a study on the ideology of Japanese security policy that finds more continuity than change, Richard Samuels nevertheless suggests that following the WWII defeat Japanese ideology shifted from "Rich Nation, Strong Army" to "Rich Nation, Strong Technology."[89] Other examples abound.[90]

This socialization against aggression shows itself repeatedly in modern Japan. First, the government goes to great lengths to characterize its own forces in defensive terms, as mentioned above. It is common for scholars studying defense issues in East Asia to face genuinely naive

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87. Peter J. Katzenstein and Nobuo Okawara, *Japan's National Security: Structures, Norms and Policy Responses in a Changing World* (Ithaca: Cornell University East Asia Program, 1993), 108-9.

88. Martin E. Weinstein, "Japan's Foreign Policy Options: Implications for the United States," in *Japan's Foreign Policy After the Cold War: Coping with Change*, ed. Gerald L. Curtis (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharp, 1993), 219.

89. Richard J. Samuels, *"Rich Nation Strong Army": National Security and the Technological Transformation of Japan* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 319.

90. E.g., Thomas Berger, "From Sword to Chrysanthemum: Japan's Culture of Anti-Militarism," *International Security* 17, no. 4 (spring 1993): 119-50; Courtney Purrington, "Tokyo's Policy Responses during the Gulf War and the Impact of the 'Iraqi Shock' on Japan," *Pacific Affairs* 65, no. 2 (summer 1992): 161-81.

statements from otherwise sophisticated Japanese students: "Japan has no military. We have a peace constitution."[91] One of the more divisive debates in recent memory in Japan was over the question of whether Japanese Self-Defense troops should be allowed to participate in peacekeeping missions.[92] That this militarily minor issue was so divisive suggests the depths to which this socialization against a foreign role for their military has permeated Japanese society. Turning to more direct measures of public support, polls taken following the promulgation of the revised "Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation" do not suggest that the Japanese populace would support an 'assertive' balancing policy. In spite of the limited degree of the actual changes in the alliance (discussed below), the Japanese populace remains profoundly ambivalent about these guidelines. According to one poll taken in September 1997, when discussion of the Guidelines was at its height, only 18 percent of those polled favored revising the 1978 Guidelines. In contrast some 37 percent opposed revision.[93]

The whitewashing of certain aspects of World War II history in Japanese textbooks may decrease this socialization, but the logic of this effect is not entirely clear-cut.[94] When Japanese texts downplay the degree of Japanese expansionism and culpability, many Japanese may well take away the lesson that even relatively moderately assertive foreign policies will lead to a backlash from the international system, thus amplifying this socialization effect. (However, a few scholars also chart some downplaying of the costs of the war. This would have an unambiguously detrimental effect on any socialization against aggression effect.)

Furthermore, a number of institutions of Japanese government also bear witness to this socialization. The Defense Agency lacks ministerial status and thus is easily outmaneuvered bureaucratically by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or Finance. Article Nine in the Japanese

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91. I have heard this numerous times at several American universities from Japanese students and scholars. I have no reason to believe the feelings being expresses were anything but sincere.

92. Kenichi Ito, "The Japanese State of Mind: Deliberations on the Gulf Crisis," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 17, no. 2 (summer 1992).

93. "Public Polled on Defense Guidelines Revision," *Kyodo*, 0311GMT, 14 September 1997, in FBIS-EAS-97-257, 16 September 1997.

94. For discussion of the manipulation of history in this regard, see Saburo Ienaga, "The Glorification of War in Japanese Education," *International Security* 18, no. 3 (winter 1993/94): 113-33.

Constitution continues to restrain at least the pace of any change in her military status. Again, these points are made forcefully in a study cited above:

> Japan's security policy is formulated within institutional structures that bias policy strongly against a forceful articulation of military security objectives and accord pride of place instead to a comprehensive definition of security that centers on economic and political dimensions of national security.[95]

It is no accident that these institutional constraints were a result of U.S. occupation: systemic pressure of the clearest kind.

Finally, this lesson is continually reinforced by several of Japan's neighbors in northern East Asia (China and Korea) who continually complain about the atrocities of Japanese soldiers and about the evil of their war. This is certainly heard by Japanese policymakers. For instance, Ozawa, one of the most prominent spokespersons for a more assertive Japan, writes:

> The bitterness of both North and South Korea over Japan's past colonial domination is still strong, and it continues to prevent the development of normal relations between Japan and the two Koreas. I expect that only efforts over a long period of time will bring resolution to the burdens and legacies of the past ... We must not forget that [Southeast Asia and Oceania] suffered severely during the Pacific War and that every country in the region has painful associations with Japan. Japan must be wary in taking unilateral action.[96]

In this section I am not arguing that Japan will remain socialized against military action in all circumstances.[97] It should be clear from the previous section that I am aware of the Japanese military's potent capabilities, and I have no doubt they would use them if directly attacked. However, this section has presented evidence that Japan has indeed been socialized against an *assertive* foreign policy. I now turn to a counter-argument that questions the relevance of these current and historical factors regarding socialization for predicting future policy.

How Robust is this Socialization?

This question might also be put, "Would Japan not revert to a more assertive balancing policy after some large shock occurs to wake it from its long post-WWII slumber?" Clearly,

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95. Katzenstein and Okawara, *Japan's National Security*, 21. For more on the constraints posed by these and other institutional structures in Japan, see that book's "Section III: The Structural Context of Japan's National Security Policy," 21-101.

96. Ichiro Ozawa, *Blueprint for a New Japan* (New York: Kodansha America, Inc., 1994), 103.

97. Nor am I arguing that other states in the region have been socialized to the same degree. Japan is unique in its history. Other states (China, Korea, etc.) will have learned very different lessons from their history. However, these

socialization effects can work both ways: Japan might be socialized against assertive foreign policy today, but against circumscribed balancing at some point in the future. However, we should expect any such change to occur slowly for four reasons. First, from historical evidence, it seems that such shifts in national foreign policy socialization in general occur over relatively long periods of time or only in response to very major events.[98] Second, no such shock would do anything to change the fundamental issue of Japan's location in a defense dominant geography, which is one of two factors supporting its circumscribed balancing policy. Third, we should recognize that Japanese circumscribed balancing has weathered quite a few moderate-sized shocks in the past five years alone: the missile tests toward Taiwan, publicity stunts on the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, Chinese nuclear tests, the Chinese Navy's taking of Mischief Reef, North Korean missile tests and naval provocations, etc.

Fourth, while political scientists often write of public opinion being led from above, the election of an 'assertive balancing' political leadership in Japan is very unlikely. This remains as true under the new electoral system as it was under the old one. Even after the speculative bubble burst and deflation gripped the Japanese economy in 1991, and even after the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) lost credibility as an efficient manager of economic growth, Japanese voters returned conservative politicians to power. Japanese voters are not revolutionary. The July 1993 electoral tremor was a popular uprising against a party structure that had betrayed the traditional social compact between politician and voter. But Japanese voters soon returned to the comfort of familiar faces and to a familiar party. The October 1996 election likewise confirmed the status quo in both Japanese domestic politics and in the Japanese foreign policy. The Socialists, who for decades had promised that, once in power, they would abrogate the treaty with the United States, instead abandoned this goal to political expediency. Once they did so, voters had no reason to find them distinctive, and the once powerful Socialist Party simply faded away as a 'dovish' alternative. The

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lessons will not affect Japan directly. They may lead to some behaviors in those states that over time will provide new lessons for Japan to learn, but I have argued that such learning will not occur instantaneously.

98. On the persistence of such perceptions, see Yuen Foong Khong, *Analogies at War : Korea, Munich, Dien Bien Phu, and the Vietnam Decisions of 1965* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992); and Jerald A. Combs, *The History of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Knopf, 1986).

remaining conservative parties—pieces of the splintered LDP—united behind the principle of an essentially status quo partnership with the United States.[99] Ozawa Ichiro learned that there is not a large enough constituency for a 'hawkish' assertive foreign policy, and proved equally unattractive to voters. Most recently, the 1998 upper house election, while a defeat for the LDP, did not represent a resounding victory for any other party. Japanese domestic politics then, are unlikely to push for rapid changes in Tokyo's foreign policy toward a more assertive stance against China.

At the beginning of this paper, I argued that defensive realism has two key theoretical underpinnings: states often find themselves in a defense dominant geostrategic environment that allows them to be less concerned about relative gains, and they are often socialized against assertive foreign policies. The two sections immediately above argue that Japan finds itself in precisely this position. Thus, we should expect it to behave, as I have argued defensive realism predicts, as a circumscribed balancer.

Below I shift to consider whether Japan is indeed currently engaging in a policy of circumscribed balancing by looking at the three criterion that define such a policy: avoidance of strong countervailing alliances, ignoring an opponent's growth in peripheral geographic and issue-areas, and avoidance of offensive strategies. I conclude that Japan's behavior in these areas evidence its behavior as a circumscribed balancer: its tangible support for the U.S.-Japan alliance is relatively weak; it has not used of mercantile policies versus the Chinese; and it limits its own military capabilities.

Whither the U.S.-Japan Alliance?

An important piece of evidence that Japanese foreign policy towards China should be characterized as circumscribed balancing comes from examination of the current U.S.-Japan alliance. However, we should note at the outset the potential bias in any evidence gleaned from this issue-area: Japanese alliance behavior might be primarily aimed at buck-passing and free-riding

99. The Democratic Party led by Hatoyama Yukio and Kan Naoto has at times suggested that U.S. troops be withdrawn from Japan. However, most recently (in April and May of 1999) it threw its support behind the revisions

to avoid the costs of balancing with China. On the other hand, in general, front-line states should be the least likely to free-ride as they are first in line for the potential aggressor. On balance, I argue that looking at this relationship provides at least some indirect evidence regarding how the Japanese might respond to a Chinese threat.

The April 1996 summit between President Clinton and Prime Minister Hashimoto was the beginning of an effort to inject new meaning into the alliance after the Cold War. In the wake of the tepid Japanese support for American policy in the 1994 crisis with North Korea, the United States had been pushing for a codification of future Japanese commitments. Proponents hailed the ensuing "Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation" claiming that "Japan crossed the threshold of the past alliance relationship of a patron-client into a more equal partnership, with each alliance partner making contributions commensurate with its overall national strength."[100] However, there are substantial reasons for skepticism on these points.

The major change in the final 1997 version of the Guidelines is a section outlining "cooperation in situations in areas surrounding Japan that will have an important influence on Japan's peace and security."[101] The scope and detail of this section suggest an important deepening of the alliance when compared to the 1978 Guidelines. However, there are also plenty of reasons for continued skepticism. First, the Japanese foreign minister stated sweepingly "the new 'guidelines' will not change the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty nor its related rights and obligations nor the fundamental framework of the United States-Japan alliance relationship."[102] Second, at best, the Japanese have *agreed to consider* a wider role but have committed to

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of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, supporting the LDP in the final Diet votes.

100. Patrick Cronin, *The U.S.-Japan Alliance Redefined*, Strategic Forum #75 (Washington, DC: Institute for National Strategic Studies, May 1996). The Asahi Shimbun editorialized "the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty has, for all intents and purposes, been rewritten," supporting a similar claim. Quoted in Nigel Holloway and Sebastian Moffett, "Cracks in the Armour," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 2 May 1996, 16. More recently, similar claims have been made following Diet approval of the alliance revisions: Nicholas D. Kristof, "Tokyo Lawmakers Pass Bill To Improve Military Ties With U.S.," *New York Times*, 28 April 1999, A1.

101. There were other changes as well. For instance after 1997, Japan is given "primary responsibility" for repelling armed attacks on its own territory. In the previous version, Japan's responsibilities were much more limited, and it depended heavily on U.S. support "Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation," November 27, 1978, reprinted in Defense Agency, *Defense of Japan, 1995* (Japan: Japan Times Ltd., 1995), 262.

102. "Obuchi Interviewed on Defense Guidelines," *Tokyo Shukan Daiyamondo*, November 8, 1997, pp. 94-97, in FBIS-EAS-97-314, 12 November 1997.

nothing.[103] Japanese statements on the guidelines repeatedly insist that the phrase "situation in areas surrounding Japan" is situational, not geographical.[104] This paradoxical exclusion of geography from the understanding of the phrase does not only grate on American ears in translation: An anonymous senior JDA official, complaining of these contortions stated "no matter how it is written, it ends up being tautological."[105] Finally, the United States and Japan never formally agreed to interpret the original treaty as narrowly as some suggested: Since 1960 the U.S.-Japan treaty has aimed to contribute to "international peace and security in the Far East", defined by Tokyo as "the area north of the Philippines, including the ROK and Taiwan."[106]

Shifting from the generalities of the agreement to the specific military policies considered in the guidelines, again the Japanese behavior seems even less like 'assertive' balancing.[107] A pledge to play an active role in enforcing economic sanctions in the form of naval embargoes (or at least to consider to so depending on 'situational' factors) might perhaps appear substantial. However, its value is unclear since Japanese officials have ruled out the use of live ammunition for the Japanese navy in enforcing UN sanctions. (In fact the Japanese plan for inspecting suspicious ships is full of toothless plans: "monitoring them, inquiring their nationalities through radio communications, doing on-the-spot inspections to examine their cargo and papers, requesting a route change, and

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103. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Dr. Kurt Campbell, DOD News Briefing, Defense Guidelines Review, 19 September 1997. He specifically notes "But both the United States and Japan do not say how we will respond in a particular situation."

104. For instance, see again "Obuchi Interviewed on Defense Guidelines," *Tokyo Shukan Daiyamondo*, 8 November 1997, 94-97, in FBIS-EAS-97-314, 12 November 1997; "LDP, Partners Disagree on Scope of Defense Guidelines," *Kyodo*, 0857GMT, 3 October 1997, in FBIS-EAS-97-276, 6 October 1997; Hideto Fujiwara, "MOFA Official Visits PRC, Gives Briefing on Guidelines," *Asahi Shimbun*, 9 October 1997, Morning Edition, 3, in FBIS-EAS-97-282, 14 October 1997.

105. "Article Says New Guidelines Contain 'Various Problems'," *Asahi Shimbun*, 25 September 1997, Morning Edition, 2, in FBIS-EAS-97-268, 26 September 1997.

106. Toshiaki Hashimoto, "Article Assesses Contents of Guidelines Final Report," *Mainichi Shimbun*, 24 September 1997, Morning Edition, 2, in FBIS-EAS-97-267, 25 September 1997. Similarly, a fairly significant Japanese commitment to regional conflict has existed since 1981, when Japan accepted responsibility for defense of its SLOCs (sea lanes of communication) out to 1,000 nautical miles.

107. This conclusion is unfortunately warranted in spite of some progress in a few areas. For instances of progress see, "Airports to Cut Flights in Crises, Open to U.S. Forces," *Kyodo*, 1014GMT, 6 September 1997, in FBIS-EAS-97-249, 9 September 1997; "Japan Prepares for Hypothetical Korean Refugee Influx," *Kyodo*, 1213GMT 2 November 1997, in FBIS-EAS-97-306, 4 November 1997; "ASDF to Transport U.S. Marines to Hokkaido for Drills," *Tokyo Shimbun*, 3 September 1997, Morning Edition, p. 1, in FBIS-EAS-97-248, 9 September 1997; "U.S., Japan Hold 1st Joint Exercise Since Guidelines Update," *Kyodo*, 0255GMT 6 November 1997, in FBIS-EAS-97-310, 10 November 1997.

using flares to let these vessels know the inspection ship is around. The use of blanks is allowed only at a distance.[108]) Another item for possible U.S.-Japan operational cooperation listed in the Guidelines is "minesweeping operations in Japanese territory and on the high seas around Japan."[109] Journalists have imagined future scenarios such as "[sailing] alongside U.S. naval vessels is a flotilla of Japanese minesweepers given the task of clearing the sea lanes in the international waters to the east of Taiwan."[110] But Japanese officials have made it clear that they have nothing like this in mind. According to the Defense Agency "the Self Defense Forces will not conduct mine-sweeping operations for the advancement of U.S. vessels."[111] According to leaks from the ruling coalition, the restrictions will go even further: "Minesweeping will only be carried out for mines clearly perceived to have been abandoned under international law."[112] The only time a nation would choose to declare its mines 'abandoned' would be *following* hostilities. This Japanese commitment (or offer to consider doing so) seems rather weak as well. Finally, regarding its promise of 'rear area' support, this kind of alliance support is hardly a major step away from Japan's current role, or from that it actually played during both the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Other examples abound.[113]

More generally, we might compare the U.S.-Japan alliance to other alliances that the United States has globally. Clearly it pales in comparison with the strength of NATO which provides a unified command structure, has recently successfully concluded its first 'out of area' operation,

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108. "Kyuma Reveals Plan for Inspecting Suspicious Vessels," *Mainichi Shimbun*, 20 November 1997, Evening Edition, 4, in FBIS-EAS-97-325, 24 November 1997.

109. See "The Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation," Washington, DC, 23 September 1997, Table A-3.

110. Nigel Holloway and Peter Landers, "Menage A Trois: Defense pact could open U.S.-Japan-China 'trialogue'," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 9 October 1997, 24.

111. "Kyuma Comments on SDF Mine-sweeping Operations," *Asahi Shimbun*, 5 November 1997, Morning Edition, p. 2, in FBIS-EAS-97-309, 6 November 1997.

112. "Ruling Parties Discuss Points of Contention on Guidelines," *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, 27 August 1997, Morning Edition, 2, in FBIS-EAS-97-240, 29 August 1997.

113. There are limitations on Japan's role near Korea ("ROK Has Mixed Feelings on U.S.-Japan Military Guidelines," *Yonhap*, 0828GMT 24 September 1997, in FBIS-EAS-97-267, 25 September 1997); overstatements regarding information sharing (Take Kawabata, "DA Official Sato on New Defense Guidelines: Interview of Ken Sato, director general of the Bureau of Defense Policy, Defense Agency", *Asagumo*, 9 October 1997, 1, in FBIS-EAS-97-323, 20 November 1997; Natsuki Motoya, "DA Head Kyuma Discusses Giving Information to U.S. Military," *Mainichi Shimbun*, 15 October 1997, Morning Edition, 1, in FBIS-EAS-97-288, 17 October 1997.), etc.

and continues to grow. Even the U.S. alliance with South Korea has a unified military command. There the pace of large-scale joint exercises has, if anything, increased since the Cold War. These two are strong robust alliances capable of deterring threats, and—failing that—jointly defeating the aggressor on the battlefield. At best, Japan has offered to consider assisting with logistics in areas far removed from the frontline.

Since the Cold War ended, Japan has not taken substantial steps to revamp its alliance with the U.S., or make it a vehicle to contain China. Despite limited rhetorical flourishes, Japan has neither significantly strengthened the alliance to allow it to face potential Chinese expansion throughout the region nor has it allowed it to wither completely. This again is precisely what we would expect from a circumscribed balancer.

Not Using Technological or Economic Policy

Were Japan pursuing an assertive balancing policy against China, we should expect it to avoid mutually beneficial economic interaction with its chosen enemy, instead engaging in competition across the board. On the other hand, if Japan were bandwagoning with China, we should expect Japan to provide China with technological tools that might enhance Chinese military capabilities. That Tokyo is pursuing neither of these policies is further evidence that Japan in engaging in circumscribed balancing.

Clearly, Japan is a mercantile state—its markets are relatively closed and its patterns of unequal investment and trade are persistent.[114] However, Japan has not targeted China with its economic mercantile policies.[115] Instead, as a true mercantilist, Japan has targeted its predatory policies against the United States and the states of the European Union. These states, and their industries, are the only ones able to provide a credible threat to Japanese economic interests. China's economy is primarily complementary to—rather than competitive with—Japan's economy. While Japan has transferred little in the way of military technology to China, that is the case for

114. Edward Lincoln, *Japan's Unequal Trade* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution, 1990).

115. See Heginbotham and Samuels, "Mercantile Realism."

Japanese relations with every other state as well, including its staunchest ally, the United States.[116] In short, while Chinese analysts have raised concerns about possible use of 'comprehensive security'[117] as an offensive weapon, there is no evidence that Japanese foreign policy currently deserves this charge.[118]

Limitations in Military Capabilities

Although the measures discussed above regarding potent Japanese military capabilities have caught the attention of Chinese military planners, they do not constitute convincing evidence that Japan has turned militarily assertive (or even that it is poised to do so in the next decade or two). Given Japan's preference for indigenous development and for co-production programs that are far more expensive than direct purchase, the Japanese defense budget buys far less 'bang for the buck' than any other of comparable size. Additionally, while some new capabilities have been added, the new National Defense Program Outline—Japan's official long term military planning document—calls for the *reduction* of unit formations in all three services. This nominal reduction deprives defense planners of an important rationale for weapons procurement. Also, Japan voluntarily limits its submarine force to 16 boats, retiring each after a mere 16 years of service. This keeps a very modern force, to be sure, but one quite a bit smaller than it could have (at no extra cost).[119] With regard to the nuclear issue, while nuclear weapons are no longer a taboo

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116. The FSX deal is widely regarded as a technology transfer bust for the U.S. firms involved. See, for instance M. A. Lorell, *Troubled Partnership: An Assessment of U.S.-Japan Collaboration on the FS-X Fighter*, (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, 1995) and GAO, National Security and International Affairs Division, *US-Japan Cooperation Development: Progress on the FSX Program Enhances Japanese Aerospace Capabilities* (Washington: Government Printing Office, August 1995).

117. This phrase—used to describe Japanese foreign policy for decades—emphasizes that security comes in many forms, and that policy instruments from the economic, technological, and cultural realms, as well as the more traditional military ones, can be used to secure the nation

118. Although 'comprehensive security' remains untested as a tool of Japanese foreign policy, Japan is, in fact, increasing interdependence with China in ways that would allow it to achieve leverage over China. If China needs Japan more than Japan needs China, then this *could* constitute an important arrow in the quiver of a viable security strategy. Albert Hirschman, *National Power and the Structure of Foreign Trade* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1945). On the conscious creation of interdependence between the two, see Christopher B. Johnstone, "Japan's China Policy: Implications for U.S.-Japan Relations," *Asian Survey* 38, no. 11 (November 1988): 1067-85. Note however, that Johnstone would characterize this interdependence in relatively benign terms.

119. "Future Japanese Submarine Technology Discussed," *Boei Gijutsu Janaru*, September 1997, 4-19, in FBIS-EAS-97-314, 11 November 1997. It would not be unreasonable to expect a submarine to run for 30 years. Were the Japanese to take advantage of this, their force could double at no added construction costs.

subject for discussion, Japanese planners are simply not preparing the population for their introduction. Tokyo has shown a willingness to bend its own military training plans in response to concerns expressed by China, a country with territorial designs on Japanese territory.[120]

More importantly, Japan's military is not currently configured towards having an offensive capability, nor does it appear likely that will be the case in the near future. In general, her military capabilities are unevenly distributed. Japan's navy is much stronger than her army. More specifically, Japan is not planning the acquisition of carriers or bombers. Without these its ability to project power is highly constrained. Her lack of air-to-air refueling capability severely limits her ability to defend far from its borders and to project forces. Her lack of substantial amphibious warfare capability that would allow her to move significant numbers of forces overseas is even more limiting.[121] While the airforce has significant capabilities to counter enemy navies, "the ASDF [Air Self Defense Force] stocks no sophisticated air-to-ground munitions" which would be necessary for any expansionary military policy.[122] The army has half as many tanks and self propelled artillery systems as a similarly sized American force would have. The disparity in attack helicopters is even more pronounced.

Finally, the potential impact of a Japanese 'revolution in military affairs' (RMA) must be considered.[123] Acquisition of modern command and control assets (such as AWACS) and advanced intelligence gathering technologies (such as satellites) certainly suggest that Japan may be going through an RMA. Furthermore, there is a perception in the literature that the RMA has

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120. "Japan's ASDF Moves Exercise from Okinawa to Northwest," *Sankei Shimbun*, 10 September 1997, Morning Edition, 2, in FBIS-EAS-97-257, 16 September 1997. The planned exercise was to simulate a Chinese attack on the Senkakus, claimed by China, but currently possessed by Japan.

121. The amphibious assault ship discussed above clearly is represents some offensive power. However, a single ship does not give the Japanese Navy substantial capability in this regard. Were procurement of a half dozen to occur, this judgement would certainly change.

122. Norman Levin, Mark Lorell, and Arthur Alexander, *The Wary Warriors: Future Directions in Japanese Security Policies*, MR-101-AF, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1993), 59.

123. For a sampling of the RMA literature see Admiral William Owen, "The Emerging System of Systems," *Military Review* (May-June 1995): 15-19; Andrew Krepinevich, "Cavalry to Computer: The Pattern of Military Revolutions," *The National Interest* (fall 1994): 30-42; John Orme, "The Utility of Force in a World of Scarcity," *International Security* 22, no. 3 (winter 1997/98): 138-167; and Stephen Biddle, "Assessing Theories of Future Warfare," *Security Studies* 8, no. 1 (autumn 1998): 1-74.

significant advantages for the offense.[124] While this concern has merit, a few counter-arguments are warranted. Scholarship on the RMA is new and sometimes problematic. First, at a general level, I would argue, intelligence technologies within an RMA would benefit the defender more than the attackers. While sensors and technologies that find non-moving targets are not well developed,[125] finding moving targets has gotten much easier. Attackers, by definition, have to move. Thus, if sensors allow us to find moving targets better than static ones, this benefits the defense over the offense. (The RMA literature considers the impact of a large bundle of technologies. Japan has obtained only a subset of these. Thus, the conclusion that the RMA enhances offensive strategies is not directly applicable to this case.) Second, nearly all of the RMA literature has been written with ground combat in mind. While this literature's conclusions may carry over to naval warfare, it is not a given that they will do so. In particular, while the implications of an RMA on sea control missions might favor the offense, its effects on amphibious operations would seem decidedly mixed.[126] Third, as with many security studies fads, the RMA literature often suffers from the 'fallacy of the last move'; that is, it tends to assume the adversary will not change her tactics. Once such strategic interaction is considered, the effects of even a one-sided RMA are ambiguous.[127] Finally, China, the country of concern here as a hypothetical adversary, has been watching the American RMA debate with interest. It has also begun to formulate responses to this that may reduce any supposed offensive advantage.[128]

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124. See cites immediately above.

125. Our ability to hit such dug-in and camouflaged targets in Kosovo was rather limited. See Barry Posen, "The NATO-Serbian War: Serbia's Political-Military Strategy," *International Security* 25, no 1 (spring 2000, forthcoming, manuscript, 25 October 1999): 12-20.

126. Conversations with several senior U.S. Marine officers over the past few years suggest this to be the case. For a rare discussion on the impact on the RMA on naval conflict (and one that is compatible with points made in the paragraph above), see George and Meredith Friedman, *The Future of War: Power, Technology, and American World Dominance in the 21st Century* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1996), "Conclusion: The Permanent Dilemma—Control and Use of the Sea in the American Epoch," in particular, pp. 406ff.

127. For a general look at possible adversary responses to RMAs, see Bruce Bennett, Christopher Twomey, and Greg Treverton, *What Are Asymmetric Strategies?,* DB-246-OSD (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 1999).

128. For Chinese thinking on this see the infamous Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui, *Chao Xian Zhan: Dui Quanqiuhua Shidai Zhanzhengfa de Xiangding [War beyond Limits: Thoughts on the Art of War in the Era of Globalism]* (Beijing: Jiefangjun Wenyi Chubanshi, 1999). Additionally see, for example Jiang Fangran, *Gao Jishu Tiaojian Xia Hetong Zuozhan Zhihui [Wartime Command under Conditions of High Technology]* (Beijing: Jiefangjun Chubanshi, 1995); Li Deyi and Zhuo Shuhuai, *Zhihui Zidonghua Zongheng [Comprehensive Automation of Command and Control]* (Beijing: Jiefangjun Chubanshi, 1998).

Without significant power projection capabilities Japan would be unable to defend her interests in areas distant from the home islands, and this will make it difficult for Japan to secure firm allies anywhere in Asia should strategic circumstances dictate such a need. While quite capable of defending her own home islands, Japan's forces—for the time being—remain on a tight leash restraining their capabilities for power projection. On issues from Taiwan to the South China Sea, Japan has a muffled bark and a muzzled bite. This is as we would expect of a circumscribed balancer. Japan is avoiding offensive forces and strategies and is limiting its ability to engage in broad-based containment policies.

In short, not only does Japan find itself in the world described by defensive realists, but it also seems that indeed it is engaging in the predicted policy of circumscribed balancing. Whether we look at the limits on its military capabilities, its relatively weak support for playing a meaningful role in the U.S.-Japan alliance, or avoidance of mercantile policies versus the Chinese, in each area we see Japan fitting the criteria that define a circumscribed balancer.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UNITED STATES

That there is a substantial chance for a peaceful accommodation between the two Asian giants—even in the absence of an American stabilizing presence in Japan—should be a great relief to U.S. policymakers. However, Japan will also avoid pursuit of any broader policies in the region that support other American interests there. In addition to the fact that the United States trades more with East Asia than with Europe (or indeed any other region of the world), there are a number of other specific security interests at stake in the region. Debates over the exact nature of these abound. However, most analysts would at least be willing to accept some subset of the following:[129]

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129. This list of interests summarizes most of what the United States *says* it wants to do: See the "Nye report" a.k.a., Department of Defense, Office of International Security Affairs, "United States Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region," Washington, DC, February 1995. It is also consistent with those interests put forth in Mike Mochizuki, "American Economic and Security Interests in Japan," A working paper for the second meeting of the study group on "American Interests in Asia: Economic and Security Priorities," sponsored by the Economic Strategy Institute, Washington, DC, 14 November 1996.

- securing sea-lanes of communication;
- maintaining an American leadership role in regional and global international institutions;
- promoting peaceful unification of the Korean Peninsula on Seoul's terms;
- encouraging peaceful resolution of the Chinese-Taiwanese conflict on terms acceptable to Taipei;
- stemming the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; and
- ensuring the independence of Indochina and Southeast Asia.

All of these American preferences diverge from those of Japan, or more precisely from those that a Japan unaligned with the United States and engaged in a circumscribed balancing policy would be willing to defend. Japan is less likely than the U.S. to get between China and Taiwan. Similarly, while such a Japan has an interest in peaceful commerce in the South China Sea, it is unlikely to defend that position very strongly. More likely, it would choose instead to pay a premium to reroute its commerce, if such an option were possible. Also, while Japan is unlikely to want to see any strengthening of the North Korean regime, it is less likely to promote unification of the peninsula.

For the United States to achieve these regional objectives, it will need to remain involved in the region. A strengthened and more equitable U.S.-Japan alliance is the best means to do this. The alliance is particularly attractive because it already exists, making both nations (as well as their neighbors throughout the region) comfortable with it, and because Japanese bases sit near the three great regional powers. But American interests are not exclusively served by a close alliance with Japan. While the alliance provides the United States with a (subsidized) foot in the regional door, like any alliance, this one is not without its own political, economic, and technological costs. Pursing alternate alliances or increasing the size of our military can also ensure that American interests in the region are achieved.[130]

But relying on a circumscribed balancing Japan to maintain regional stability on its own will not.

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130. A full discussion of the three viable American strategies (as well as a discussion of the shortcomings of two others: isolationism and multilateralism) can be found in Richard Samuels and Christopher Twomey, "The Eagle Eyes the Pacific: American Foreign Policy Options in East Asia after the Cold War," in *The U.S.-Japan Alliance: Past, Present, and Future*, eds. Patrick Cronin and Michael Green (Washington, DC: Council on Foreign Relations, 1999).